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Planning under Fire

EDITORIAL

Fall of the Labor Government

by H. N. BRAILSFORD

Challenge of the Five Year Plan

by MICHAEL FARBMAN

Close-ups in the Coal Fields - *James Myers*

Department of Public Words - *Felix Ray*

Calling on Coolidge - *Robert Littell*

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The Week

THE decision of the World Court regarding the German-Austrian customs union is a curious document, to say the least. The Court forbids the customs union, but does so in a way which leaves the victors far from happy. The decision was only by eight judges to seven, and the minority includes the members of the Court from the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Japan. It had been supposed that the union would be forbidden on the ground that it contravened the Treaty of St. Germain, but only a minority of seven members of the Court could be found to sustain this view. The pretext found for holding the proposal illegal was the pledges given by Austria in 1922, when she was financially rehabilitated through the League of Nations, that she would "abstain from any negotiations or from any economic or financial engagement" which would directly or indirectly compromise her freedom. The "French bloc" in the Court was able to muster a majority of one for the argument that the union would violate this promise, although the dissenting judges held that there was absolutely no ground for the fear that the customs union would have any such result. The Court's decision will have no practical importance, since French pressure had already caused Germany and Austria to renounce the project; but the character of the decision is a grave disappointment both to France and to those eager friends of the Court who had expected that it would remain above the battle, devoid of nationalistic prejudice and devoted to the calm consideration of purely juristic questions.

DESPITE the regrets of these individuals, we feel that the World Court and the nations are to be congratulated that, by virtue of its first highly controversial decision, the Court is universally recognized as a political and not merely a judicial body. The judges clearly voted in accordance with their respective views of desirable policy, not as august interpreters of a self-contained and supposedly supreme code of law. The Supreme Court of the United States, like all other high judicial tribunals, is also a political body. The chief difficulty has been, not that it is one—for that cannot be avoided—but that many of its members and the public have not recognized it as such. For follies can be committed in the name of an abstract law which would be laughed out of court if they had to be justified on grounds of policy and interest, of their practical effect in a workaday world. And interests can be served by pretensions of utter judicial impartiality as well as by frank avowal of partisanship. The principal desideratum in selecting judges for the World Court or any other bench is to find men whose ability to choose policies is based on breadth of sympathy and scholarship, and whose partisanship is engaged more by the interests of the whole group over whose disputes they sit than by any one part of it. In these respects, it is probable that the personnel of the World Court could be improved. But, in the meantime, we should remember that even a bad decision is preferable to no decision except by force. A single decision does not establish an irreversible policy; most courts in the end respond to the pressure of opinion and events.

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INSPIRED dispatches from Washington recently represented the President to be open-minded on the question of tax increases and federal unemployment relief. Previously, it had been understood, he was firmly opposed to both. Though tax increases may be inevitable in the long run, and though ability to devote federal money to the feeding and shelter of the jobless depends on increasing the tax revenue next year, party strategists have agreed that the one measure to be avoided just before an election is boosting the rates on incomes and profits. One wonders just how seriously this report of open-mindedness is to be taken. A similar report was spread just before Mr. Hoover did the politically expedient thing by signing the Smoot-Hawley tariff bill. According to the dispatches, the President is waiting to see what turn business will take before Congress convenes, in the hope that improvement will make tax increases unnecessary. He is also waiting to see the result of the drive for unemployment funds under the Gifford Committee, in order to discover whether federal aid will be necessary. But, in both cases, he can learn nothing by December first that is not already known. Business cannot improve enough in 1931 to bring the tax receipts of 1932 even within hailing distance of the inadequate revenues of this year. And private charity, plus local public funds, cannot give adequate relief to the unemployed. A Congress convening in December cannot give prompt enough consideration to either matter, even if the President tardily decides on action. The "open-mindedness" is nothing if not propaganda.

ALL other proposals for ending the state of anarchy that exists in the bituminous-coal industry having been rejected, and the majority of the operators having even refused to attend a conference at which they would be discussed, The Coal Age, a publication which generally represents the views of these same operators, now comes forward with a stabilization program of its own. The program consists of seven items, but most of these can be disregarded. "More mechanization," "coördinated research to develop new uses," "more consolidations," "more safety"—these are the commonplace exhortations uttered when any industry falls into difficulties. The other items in the program are more interesting, especially as coming from a magazine whose opinions are usually so close to those of the operators themselves. "Stabilized industrial relations," says The Coal Age, "must come through a recognition and an acceptance of an outside labor organization by a sufficiently large percentage of operators to give the wages and the working conditions so established a controlling influence in the districts where direct recognition is withheld." And then, having made this sensational gesture toward industrial liberalism, the program inevitably turns to the government for aid. "Production control" and "sound merchandising" are the two remaining planks, and these can be attained only through modification of the federal anti-trust laws in order to legalize production-control agreements and the fixing of prices. Once more the Sherman Law is blamed for all the sins of American industry. There is no question that it must eventually be modified—but meanwhile one doubts that the industrialists who have got us into our present fix through being given so much liberty, will get us out of it again merely by being given more liberty than before.

TO SAY that the bloody general strike in Spain, which has been suppressed by the Madrid government, is all the work of the Catalan separatists is an unfair piece of propaganda. The syndicalist movement has, it is true, been strongest in Catalonia, but it has not been confined to that district. The syndicalists are numerous (they claim from 700,000 to 1,000,000 agricultural and industrial workers); they are well organized and they have the enormous advantage of knowing exactly what they want—a complete social upheaval. It is evident that the present government is seriously alarmed at the prospect of a second successful revolution, under radical auspices. To forestall this, it is moving rapidly to the Left, at the same moment that it is doing all in its power to suppress the syndicalists. But the experience of many countries proves that when a government starts making concessions to radicalism, it is very difficult to halt this process. A genuinely radical regime in Spain would change the whole complexion of western European affairs.

EACH period has its characteristic sports, and this is no less true of the Grand Slump than it was of the Great Inflation. The colleges were the first to register the change. Some months ago it was reported that college football was yielding in popularity to more informal sports like tennis, golf and swimming. Students decided that they would rather play games themselves than stagger under the weight of coonskin coats and pocket flasks to the Palmer Stadium or the Yale Bowl. The same tendency has now extended itself to the country as a whole. The great mass-spectacles once characteristic of American sport are becoming much less massive. Boxing promoters no longer plan for million-dollar gates; they are lucky to get a hundred thousand in cold cash, before deducting expenses of $99,900. Public interest in sport has become, in greater measure, a private and personal interest, and the summer now ending might be described as the season of miniature games. This generality, however, has one important exception. Miniature golf is now of minimal, almost microscopic, importance.

MIDGET, peewee or pocket-size golf is in fact too public a sport to meet the tastes of a depression era. Croquet played in the back yard, with father being soundly trounced by the children, has become a more popular amusement. Still more popular

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are the miniature forms of tennis—ping-pong, badminton and the game variously known as deck, ring or quoit tennis. Handball has moved from gymnasiums into the open fields, where it is played against homemade backstops. Quoits or horseshoes are carried on almost every family picnic. . . . One characteristic of all these games is that they are inexpensive; they meet the requirements of a period when leisure is plentiful and money scarce. Another characteristic is that they bring whole families together. Two years ago it seemed that the family was a vanishing institution; it seemed, moreover, that drinking and petting were the only sports actively practised by the crowds that sat in tiers at football games or boxing bouts. For moralists at least, the depression has a silver lining—even if silver is worth only twenty-seven cents an ounce.

CHINA has completed negotiations with the United States for the purchase of 15,000,000 bushels of wheat. She needs more, and we need to sell more, but this is all she can afford to buy at present, even on long-term credits. This quantity of wheat, will of course, do little to alleviate the dreadful condition among the victims of the recent floods and typhoon. The amount is too small; but even if it were larger, the means of transport are lacking. Medical supplies are as badly needed as food, and are equally unavailable. No one knows how many persons have already died; the most popular estimate is half a million. Nobody knows how many more will perish, of starvation, exposure or disease, but the number may easily run into the millions. The apathy with which the rest of the world contemplates this tragedy is an extraordinary phenomenon, but one quite possible to understand. For it is now generally recognized that China is paying the price for a tremendous overpopulation, and that the great floods, themselves due largely to the deforesting of large areas in the search for more land to cultivate, are merely accomplishing in one year the work that starvation might do in ten.

THE "Buy in Your Own State" movement which started as a campaign to bolster home industries is spreading through the West and shows promise of developing into a first-class nuisance. As Illinois excludes out-of-state materials, so South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa have placed taxes on products like vegetable shortening, thus discriminating against Southern states which raise cottonseed oil and favoring the local hog lard. Reprisal is immediately threatened in the South, in the form of taxes on corn and oats. Pennsylvania has already retaliated with a bill prohibiting the use in public works of materials from the states which discriminate. Thus it is war between the states, an economic war which interferes with national industries, national transportation and the whole national economy in order to "patronize your neighborhood store." So far, the warfare has chiefly been a matter of sniping; yet it points to an insane form of regionalism whose purpose, so far as one can see, is simply to turn this country back to the condition of fedual Germany. For Illinois, whose hundred industries compete successfully in forty-eight states, the campaign of discrimination may prove a deadly boomerang. If the grass begins to grow in her piano and watch factories and Chicago's streets are piled high with unsold hams and cans of corned beef, she will repent of her ways and plead for peace.

After the Customs Union

THE FAMOUS German-Austrian customs union is dead before it was ever born. It has been killed, not by the astonishing decision of the World Court, but by the exercise of financial pressure upon Germany and Austria by France. The Austrians were not even able to exact a financial *quid pro quo;* France insisted that the customs union should be abandoned first, and financial assistance discussed afterward. It is probable, however, that she will make a loan to Austria and help relieve, for the time being, the latter's critical financial situation.

In a world of power politics, it is easy to see in retrospect how Germany blundered in announcing the customs-union proposal just when she did. The project in itself was the soundest of good sense, economically speaking; but the French insisted on viewing it as the first step toward the dreaded Anschluss, the complete merging of the two countries. They have bitterly opposed this ever since the War, as they have any and every thing which might strengthen Germany economically and in manpower and thereby make her a more formidable enemy in the prospective next war on which French eyes are so hypnotically fixed. They regarded the proposal as an open defiance; and Germany, already in danger of financial collapse, was in no position to bring down upon her head the French wrath.

It is still too early to tell what will be the final political consequence of the abortive effort. They are saying in Europe that France has won an important political victory, that not only Austria, but Hungary as well, is being swung into her orbit. But these sudden, sweeping changes seldom take place as advertised. France has done nothing to gain Austrian gratitude: on the contrary, the secret sympathies of the Austrians are more firmly fixed on Germany than ever. Whatever hardships they suffer henceforth will be blamed on France even more completely than in the past. As for Hungary, she is still maniacally determined to get back the territories lost in 1919, and correctly believes that France is chiefly responsible for keeping the door barred against treaty revision. Neither loans nor special trade treaties of a reciprocal character can overcome in a week or in a year the deeply rooted passions of Middle Europe.

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It cannot be denied that the position of France in Europe is at the present moment extraordinarily strong. Within the past few weeks she has participated in the financial rehabilitation (at least for the moment) both of her former enemy and of the strongest of her allies. Her dominance over the Little Entente shows no signs of weakening. Italy, which a few months ago seemed prepared to challenge her, is today in a markedly more conciliatory mood. While French statesmen continue to go to Geneva and talk in terms of Pan-Europe, universal renunciation of war and spiritual and physical disarmament, they act in a very different role at their desks in Paris, maintaining and increasing to the utmost possible extent the French dominance of the Continent, and backing it up by extremely effective military preparations. To the casual observer, the present French success would seem to be a vindication of her philosophy, and a tribute to her leaders.

Yet it needs little reflection to convince anyone that the flush of success is in this case a fevered one, marking an unhealthy condition which will not last. The French position can be compared in some ways to that of Germany in the years preceding 1914. France is buying her present aggrandizement at a stiff price, and some day the bill must be met. She is keeping Germany prostrate, sullen and defiant. None of the hatreds which she engendered in the course of the post-war settlements has been liquidated. The financial measures taken for the relief of Germany are only temporary palliatives; unless the burden of reparations is tremendously reduced, the difficulties will again arise. Each time the matter comes to an issue, and France decides once more to continue on the old road, she increases the number of those throughout the world who believe her course to be wrong and dangerous. Each time, it becomes increasingly evident that the sickness of the world cannot be cured until she abandons her present path in favor of one which leads in an altogether different direction. To be sure, her policy is not unique. It is strikingly similar to those of President Hoover, of the British Conservatives, of the Hitlerites in Germany and the Italian Fascists. The difference is that France occupies a key position, and that as long she continues on her present course, other countries with similar ambitions can hide behind her skirts.

When we speak of "French policy" in this connection, we mean, of course, not the policy of the French nation, but that of its present government. There are important elements within France which are as strongly opposed to the present course as is anyone in any other land. There is at least a possibility that these other elements may come into control in the fairly near future; and everyone interested in peace and prosperity must hope that this will take place. After all, Germany and Austria can survive without the customs union; but Europe certainly cannot survive indefinitely as things are now going without an explosion which might be as catastrophic in its effect as the World War itself.

Planning under Fire

AS THE days pass, the discussion of economic planning increases. We have had the Labor Sunday message of the Federal Council of Churches, urging, on grounds of social morality, an economy ordered in the interest of the security and well being of the worker. We have had the Congress of the International Industrial Relations Association at Amsterdam to consider the subject, at which were presented scholarly papers by experts like H. S. Person, managing director of the Taylor Society, and Lewis Lorwin of the Brookings Institution. The Williamstown Institute of Politics echoed the debate. About the edges of the subject somebody is continually breaking into the papers with a new plan or a new call to action.

New leading ideas always meet resistance on the part of sluggish minds and stereotyped systems of thought; they have to make their way against established social customs and vested interests. An idea, of course, is not valid just because it appears new. Neither is it invalid for that reason. We may profit by observing the fortunes of this idea in its impact upon older thought patterns. Are there reasons to believe that it may really affect them?

Many a suggestion never appeals strongly to enough people so that it even stimulates resistance. It is drowned in a sea of silence. If voices are raised to oppose it, this is at least a sign that it has begun to bite. We can be pretty sure that an idea which is lost without opposition, however intrinsically valid it may be, has come before its time. By the same token, we can be sure that an idea which is rapidly accepted by everyone who is meshed with existing conventions, which achieves a rapid success without much opposition, is a cheat. It will vanish without practical effect. The biting quality of an idea is the preliminary test of its validity. And this idea does bite. It is recognized to have enough potentiality of success so that something must be said about it. And there is enough in it which disturbs complacent minds so that they are aroused to hostility. The course of the opposition may be traced from Mr. Coolidge through Mr. Hoover and Mark Sullivan, through the New York Herald Tribune and New York Times editorial pages to numerous other journals, to economists of the laissez-faire school, and even to some Socialists or Communists who resent what seems to be a competitive product which may infringe on their trademarked goods.

Perhaps the most common hostile comment is that it is the new fashion. The implication is that it appeals mainly to shallow people who must always have something new to talk about, like psychoanalysis, glands or humanism. The more popular it becomes, the more quickly it will be outmoded, like the Eugénie hats. But if it stimulates a fashion, this does not necessarily mean that it has no substance. Many foolish things are bound to be said

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about it. Every movement has its camp followers, its lunatic fringe. Calling it a fashion is also a fashion—and an even later one. Its merits will not be decided by any such mode of ridicule.

A more serious objection is that it is vague and undefined. Planning is just a word. It does not mean anything concrete. Put the economists or the great industrialists together in a room to manage industry, and they would not know what to do. Interminable conflicts of theory would result. Just what kind of plan do you propose? If any audacious planner accepts this challenge by describing in more detail the sort of thing he does propose, the wind of objection at once veers. This is too definite. It is a hard-and-fast scheme to freeze industry in a predetermined mold. Such a thing is impossible. It would prevent progress.

Both objections—mutually contradictory as they are—miss the point entirely. Planning is not twelve men sitting in swivel chairs in a room in Washington, managing every detail of industry. Neither is it a hard-and-fast scheme set down by a theorist in his study, which makes no allowance for change. It is a method, a technique. It is the substitution of research, foresight and control for ignorance, guess and particularistic chaos. Scientific management is its name when applied to individual enterprises. It implies a continuous working process of coördination, of discovering the necessities inherent in a given situation and meeting them. It means applying intelligent management as a substitute for haphazardness. Twelve men sitting in a room could not improvise every detail of the activities of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company or of the General Motors Corporation, nor could any detached economist draw a blueprint of either. Yet both are managed, planned. Internally, they are coördinated as multiple units. Without being planned, they could not change intelligently, or adapt themselves to change with as little friction as they do. The advocate of national planning urges the application of similar methods to larger areas of activity, for collective purposes. The prudent theorist who draws up a plan does so merely as a tentative, illustrative suggestion of what a blueprint of our economic activities might look like after adequate research and practical adjustment (carried on by many experts in the course of an attempt to deal with the actual situation) had begun to do their work.

Of course we do not know exactly how to plan by whole industries, or by nations, or internationally, before we have begun to try. The child in school does not know how to write before he begins to practise. There must be a good deal of fumbling to start with. Socially, as individually, we learn by doing.

Other objections multiply as a result of ignorance concerning what the proposal really is. We hear that it would substitute dictatorship for liberty. Management cannot be applied to such large areas. A mistaken plan would be worse than no plan at all, since our present small-scale activities allow for experiment and adjustment. Volumes might be written on each of these themes. But paragraphs will have to do here.

Liberty. The ideal economic "liberty" of the laissez-faire economist now exists in the unmanaged industries of bituminous coal, wheat growing, cotton growing, cotton-textile manufacture. How really free are any of the participants in these industries? How free are ten million unemployed men and women? Abstract liberty does not exist. People are restrained by the situations in which they are. The only possible liberty consists in organizing human activities to deal effectively with these situations. Liberty can have meaning only in relation to defined objectives.

Management of Large Units. "The development of a technique of general administrative research, standardization and control indicates that there may be no limit to the manageable size of enterprises. . . . There are now in the United States and Europe consolidations of enterprises, diverse as to the nature of their products and geographically widely scattered, which are managed more effectively than even small enterprises were managed a decade ago. This is because industry is learning how to achieve through research and standardization an effective balance between centralization and decentralization."—H. S. Person, managing director of the Taylor Society.

Experiment and Adjustment. Unplanned and competitive American agriculture has been engaged in experiment and adjustment ever since 1917—to go no further back. Experts agree that so long as it remains individualistic it is probably in for at least another generation of confusion and misery. The chief objection to the lack of planning is that it prevents intelligent experiment and prompt adjustment. The chief desideratum of planning is that it embodies the application of intelligence and control to the continual pressure of change.

We venture to predict that the idea of planning will eventually be assimilated by its detractors through an intellectual device. They will pretend that there is nothing new about it, that all the time it was implicit in the natural development of machine industry. It is not utopian, they will say, but only ordinary common sense, such as we have always practised. And the advocates of planning will allow them this satisfaction. For there will be a large measure of truth in it. The technique exists; it was an essential development of machine industry. The situation demanding the application of this technique to broader realms also exists; that, too, was an inevitable result of the machine. Like all valid ideas, this one has strong roots in human habits and dispositions. And, like all revolutions, the revolution which it must eventually bring about is essentially not utopian, but merely the application of common sense to changed conditions. Over the centuries of history, mankind has always been experiencing such revolutions as these.

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Science—and Other Values

WHEN Bukharin last April announced the Soviet policy of subordinating scientific research to the practical interests of the socialist state, the world of science shuddered with horror. That the freedom of scientific inquiry should be subordinated to the interests of Marxian dogmatism and economic utility—what a mad profanation of the sacred torch of science! If one reads, however, the abstracts of the papers presented by the Soviet delegates at the recent London congress on the History of Science and Technology, one begins to see that the Russian point of view is not completely mad. Narrow it is, both as regards the social interpretation of the history of science and as regards contemporary research policy. But the important point is that the Russians have a unified philosophic outlook and a unified system of social values. Science is considered in terms of this system of values, and is not left as a law unto itself, as an absolute which no one must dare bring into relation with other phases of life, for fear of desecration.

In America, and in capitalistic countries generally, the role of science and the scientist is replete with paradoxes. Why do we encourage research in pure science? If one asks that question, the answer that one receives, both from the apologist for science and from the scientist himself, is that the more science goes after pure theory, the richer the harvest of practical applications that is bound to follow. Look at Faraday and Maxwell and see what has followed from their discoveries in pure science—the whole of electro-technology and radio! As a defense of science, this is a good deal like advising a person to be impractical for the sake of being practical. It does not account for the origin of science as a cultural interest, when its technological applications could not be foreseen, nor for its present relation to other cultural interests, with which science must necessarily compete. Indeed the actual effect of this defense of pure science is that science alone of our various cultural and ideal interests is singled out as legitimate, because of the striking practical applications that have followed from it. Why is pure science specially to be encouraged, but not pure philosophy, pure art and pure scholarship? In each case we have a cultural interest developing through an immanent ideal drive out of a practical worldly concern. A sound outlook would encourage them all in proportion to the social resources available and in proportion to the bearing of each on cultural life as a whole. It would not make a God out of one combination, like technology-science, in the belief that it was thus discharging the total debt to the real and the ideal.

Nor is it only society that derives from its encouragement of science the illusion of being both practical and idealistic. The scientist has, as no other intellectual worker in contemporary life, the feeling of having made the best of two worlds. His work is accepted as part of the practical organization, the vested interests of society. At the same time he has the satisfaction of being recognized as a worker in an ideal realm. He is well paid, but not so well paid as to be deprived of the sense of superiority over the business man. And specialist that he is, he is accepted as an authority on all social questions, so that ethical pronouncements which would be severely scrutinized if they came from a non-scientist are accepted as sage advice when uttered by his scientific lips. No wonder that at the university he feels and expresses a certain arrogance towards his less fortunate humanistic colleagues. By force of his alliance with Philistine business men he has become something of a Philistine himself, frequently unsympathetic to other workers for the ideal, and unable to appreciate, now that his own struggle is finished, that artists and men of letters should have to continue to struggle against a reluctant and conservative society.

The control of science, properly organized in the cultural interests of society, would be a boon both to society and to the scientist. It might end the favored and exclusive position that science now has, but it would give science and other values their just and proper place in the cultural scheme of things. In so doing, it would free the scientist from the responsibility for any untoward consequences that flow from the social misuse of science and its applications. At the present time, when the scientist is accused of being partly responsible for the tragedy of the World War and for the smaller tragedies of the machine age, he exculpates himself on the ground that his task is to find scientific truths, not to concern himself with their application or misapplication. In this he is quite right. But the corollary is that society has other interests to foster besides science. When it is a question, for example, of a $6,000,000 telescope for an astronomical observatory, it is not to be regarded as an absolute demand on society simply because it is in the name of science. It is to be judged in relation to other cultural needs and to the available resources of society. If we do not live by bread alone, we certainly cannot live by science alone.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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The Fall of the Labor Government

THE HISTORIAN of the future who has to explain the sudden fall of the second Labor government in England and the formation of a national government in its place will have a fascinating but difficult task. He will have to divine the personalities of four men: Mr. MacDonald, emotional, sensitive, yet cautious; Philip Snowden, rough-hewn, limited, inelastic, the man who delights in saying No, and in saying it with rasping rudeness; Mr. Thomas, the adroit man-in-the-street; and Mr. Henderson, the unique party "boss" who kept his honesty and his faith in democracy. Behind these men he will have to divine the average inarticulate M. P., often a labor-union official, who was the party which they led. He must show how these men reacted against a background of sinking price levels and rising gold values, the tottering fabric of German finance and the staggering totals of English unemployment. How far did they understand these mysteries? Did they accept the sound orthodox view of the City, the banks and The Times, or were any of them consciously or subconsciously aware that a class struggle is going on when values shift and incomes are adjusted to a new price level? The historian will have the advantage of reading the event of today in the light of its sequel. My task is as fascinating but infinitely more difficult; I must guess the future, I must struggle against personal antipathies and sympathies in judging men whom I know. I must proceed on an individual and partisan view of the financial mysteries.

The effort is worth making, for the event is a decisive one in British politics. I do not think that the Labor party is split. It has merely shed three leaders who enjoyed an unusual personal ascendancy which had enabled them to command without convincing it. I doubt whether a score of its 288 Members of Parliament will follow these leaders, and among the rank and file the proportion will be smaller still. I think that in obedience to instinct rather than reason, it has stumbled into an attitude of opposition to the propertied class which may grow stiffer and conceivably more intelligent as the months and years go by. I predict for the national government a rather longer life than its promoters seem to desire, and I believe that while it will succeed in restoring confidence in sterling, it will fail as signally in curing the trade depression. I think that this combination (which one must not call a coalition) will be tempted to remain in being to complete the Indian settlement, to participate in the Disarmament Conference and to introduce the normal budget in May. It might continue to cooperate even longer if the Tories could repress their impatience to introduce a tariff, or if Mr. Snowden could bring himself to yield. The event which has happened is, in short, that British politics have belatedly ranged themselves in the semblance of a class conflict, which the leadership of the three moderate Ministers had hitherto obscured. Nothing veils it now, save the distraction of the tariff controversy.

The event, in so far as it concerns the leaders, is less sudden than it looks. Rumor which was, I think, well founded, had ascribed to Mr. MacDonald the intention of favoring a national government many weeks ago. Mr. Snowden had publicly advocated a coalition with the Liberals a full three years ago. But in fact the national government, in a veiled form, had existed under the surface throughout the second Labor administration. Consultation became habitual, with the Liberals over domestic policy, with both the other parties over external affairs. Tories and Liberals sat as full members of the Round Table Conference over India. It was noticeable that whenever this Labor government appointed a public committee or commission to investigate facts or consider policy, it invariably chose a Tory or Liberal as chairman, and as invariably ignored the opinion of the Labor members when, as usually happened, they presented a minority report. This habit of collaboration was at first a necessity imposed on the Labor government by its lack of a majority; as time went on, it was manifestly followed *con amore*. The leaders had been absorbed by the governing class.

While this went on, the rank and file of the party grew increasingly restive. It did not like this collaboration: its cherished aim had been to destroy the Liberals. It was angry and contemptuous over the failure to cope with unemployment by a bold scheme of national development. It upset Mr. Thomas when he had manifestly failed, and once it ventured on a nearly general attack upon Mr. Snowden at a party meeting; he escaped, I think, only because of the chivalry which his illness aroused. For several reasons, however, the discontent remained smothered and inarticulate. The leaders of revolt, first Sir Oswald Mosley and then the I. L. P., were maladroit and personally unpopular. Mr. MacDonald, whom nature endowed with a commanding presence, is a skillful manager of men, though his art is rather to silence and intimidate than to persuade and win. But the main reason for this outward loyalty was that a large proportion of the party knew that if they precipitated an election they would infallibly lose their seats. In the meantime, over one-third of them held some minor office, which gave them a sense of importance, and in many cases some additional in-

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come. So the discontent smoldered as inarticulate pessimism, perceptible enough in Parliament, but painfully evident in the electorate, which had lost the illusions and enthusiasms of 1929.

The revolt came at last, massive, unhesitating and nearly unanimous, because the three leaders proposed in the name of economy to cut the "dole," and to inaugurate a general scaling down of wages. They were doing it, moreover, manifestly under the advice if not the dictation of the banks. One may argue endlessly over the necessity of such a course. The labor unions and the average Labor M. P., who has not been absorbed into the governing class and has kept his contact with the masses, know very well how the typical working-class elector, man and woman, will react to such a stroke by the Labor government. There is a rock-bottom instinct of militancy, a stubborn inherited class loyalty, which will resent this decision in the face of every argument, and punish it at the polls as treachery. The union leaders accordingly will have none of it. Some will shrug their shoulders: "If it's necessary, then let the Tories do it." Some will fight it with fierce conviction. The decisive factor was the attitude of the labor unions: they care little or nothing about Socialism, but they exist to maintain wage levels and improve them. They were bound to fight. And fighting is easy. They have in Mr. Henderson a leader. He is not a brilliant figure: he lacks the romantic appeal of Mr. MacDonald, the formidable dialectic endowment of Mr. Snowden, the subtlety and pliability of Mr. Thomas. But his record at the Foreign Office has been good: he is honest and plain-spoken; he has remained in office what he was in opposition; the party trusts him as it trusts no other. He has the "machine" under his control, and finally, with it and the labor unions goes The Daily Herald, a popular paper for the masses, with a circulation of one and a quarter millions, which can be used to state a political case forcibly and simply. The Labor party lost irreparably in international prestige when its leaders deserted it: it has, on the other hand, strengthened its hold on the masses, and may poll rather better at the next election than it would have done with the burden of Mr. Snowden's negations on its shoulders.

The hand-to-mouth historian has next to show how the Labor government got itself into this painful crisis. If the reader expects me to say that the country was going bankrupt because Socialists squandered money on the "dole" and the social services, I shall disappoint him. The cause of this crisis was something else, and it is perfectly well known. The City (to use our name for your Wall Street) had been lending recklessly to Germany and Austria, to the extent of some $500,000,000, all of it in short-term credits, which are now frozen stiff. These were not the hard-earned savings of the gentlemen of the City. If anyone had stinted himself to amass them, it was the French peasant. What the City did was to borrow from France at 3 percent, to lend to Germany at 6 or 8 percent. Correct persons call this transaction a discharge of international duty and magnanimity to a fallen foe. Presently the French began to see a vision: they saw the banks of Vienna, Berlin and London as Alpine climbers tied together by a rope: two had tumbled, must they not drag the other down? Accordingly, the French in their prudence withdrew their deposits from London: there was a run on the Bank and a drain of gold. The reserve must have disappeared, had not New York and Paris decided to save the Bank of England, by lending it jointly $250,000,000. Their aid for some reason failed to restore "confidence." The drain went on: sterling was still in danger; it was evident that if further credits should be needed from abroad, something much more drastic must be done to restore "confidence."

These are the arithmetical facts, but "confidence" is something psychological. My commentary can only be subjective, but I shall try to disentangle it from the facts. We have to explain this curious phenomenon: that virtually no one in the British press ever mentions the manifest financial cause for the shakiness of sterling—that the City had been lending other people's savings, and could not replace them when they were called in. It was, in short, a banking crisis, complicated by its international diffusion. It affected the standing of the City in its account with the world. It caused sterling to shiver and sag, because there was reason to doubt whether the City as a banking organism, or in the last resort, we as a nation, could pay our debt to the world in gold.

Yet everyone, bankers, journalists, politicians, began to talk of something wholly different—the "dole," the unbalanced budget, the waste of money on teachers' salaries. Now all this is deplorable enough, if you like (save the teachers' salaries, which are much too low); budgets ought to balance; the "dole" is a wretched but necessary substitute for constructive work. But how does this affect us in our accounting with the world? We distribute our national income in our own queer insular way. We take $4.25 a week from a stockbroker and give it to an unemployed miner; we tax shopkeepers and pay teachers. You may, if you please, say that the stockbroker and the shopkeeper are the more sympathetic and deserving persons. But how does this concern Paris and New York? Our total wealth remains intact as a national unit, however we may choose to tax and pay and subsidize each other. I fail entirely to understand the relevancy of the "dole" to this crisis. It could affect it only if we were to pay the "dole" by printing money. If anyone really suspected Mr. Snowden of that iniquity, he does not know that Yorkshireman's obstinate integrity. So far from inflating, we have been deflating with remorseless perseverance through ten years of depression. The "dole" causes no drain of gold: it remains in the

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country. What caused the drain was the genial practice of the City, which borrows abroad at 3 and lends abroad at 8.

Dismiss all this reasoning if you will: it is merely mine. What the City said was that "confidence" could be restored only if we cut the "dole" and hacked teachers' salaries. This was, it assured us, the French view. That French view was expounded by people who could not read a French money article if they tried, and soon a hundred pens were repeating it in the popular press. It happened that at this critical moment the "economy" committee appointed by Mr. Snowden reported. As usual, the Labor government ignored the dissent of the Labor members on it, and collapsed before the views of its City chairman, Sir George May, who reflected the usual Tory view about the uselessness of education and research and the iniquity of the "dole." It was duly cabled to Paris, and came back with a French endorsement. Here then was the road to "confidence": we must do what the City and the French and Sir George May demanded. The general public was intimidated. It is much too well drilled to recollect that bankers are moneylenders, who borrow at 3 and lend at 8, and hunt their profits on occasion with abnormal recklessness: it regards them as disinterested experts in public finance. That apparently was the view of the majority of the Labor Cabinet also. Mr. MacDonald moves in a world of ethical values and is never at his ease when confronted with an economic problem; Mr. Snowden is a heroic Victorian, who refuses to advance beyond Gladstone, qualified with a dash of Henry George.

What the City demanded was logical and simple. The slump had lowered wholesale prices in two years from an index of 135 to 91, and raised gold in the same proportion: we must, therefore, deflate down to this new level—salaries, wages and doles. The specious formula of "equal sacrifice" was accepted, and a Minister's salary of $25,000 was to be cut by 20 percent, while the miner who receives $4.25 a week from the "dole" would lose 10 percent. The former would economize on a car: the latter on his breakfast. The main result would be that while all variable incomes would shrink, fixed money incomes would draw a larger proportion than ever of the nation's wealth. The dominance of the *rentier* has been the salient social and economic fact in post-war England. In 1924 our leading statisticians, Sir Josiah Stamp and Professor Bowley, reckoned that such incomes (drawn from the public debt, debentures and rents) amounted to £1,070,000,000, or 26.4 percent of the total national income. I reckon that the shrinkage in total income corresponding to the fall in wholesale prices has raised the *rentier's* share to 35 percent. In six years his quarter has swollen to over a third. To stabilize on the lower level (if, indeed, we drop no further) is to confirm this claim of the passive creditor to a higher share, at the expense of enterprise, organization and labor.

One cannot blame bankers for taking this view: they are the creditor's guardians and leaders. What is startling is that Labor leaders could accept it so simply. Mr. Snowden is, indeed, waiting for a chance to convert some portion of the War debt. That would slightly reduce the *rentier's* tribute, leaving intact, however, the major part of the national debt, the entire municipal and overseas debt, with debentures and rents. So far as one knows, the late Cabinet rejected the proposal of the I. L. P.: to levy a special income tax on these fixed money incomes, which would have balanced in part the increment which they enjoyed from the slump. Yet a 10-percent tax would almost have sufficed to balance the Budget. Nor was it disposed to mobilize our capital investments abroad, as was done during the War, though they would have furnished ample security for any further credit which we might have required from New York.

One might go on, if space allowed, to argue that this ruthless deflation could have been avoided, even if one eliminated expedients which economic orthodoxy condemns. They involve, however, a control of imports, and that Mr. Snowden forbids. The result is a solution which satisfies the City and drives Labor to revolt. Dimly and instinctively the working mass suspects that its welfare has been sacrificed to the moneylenders' trade. It is not evident that industry must boom because buying power is reduced. It is even possible that a larger number of unemployed may counteract the saving on the "dole." But "confidence," which reasons strangely, will be restored, and the bankers will continue to borrow at 3 and lend at 8.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

London.

Poem

These long days lengthen out care.
Sorrow should be winter wear.

Sorrow should sit
By the unraveling fire, and knit;

Sorrow should walk
Over shed leaf and rotting stalk;

Sorrow, the dark stranger,
Silent should kneel before the Christmas manger,

And offer
The grief-foreshadowing myrrh.

But in these lengthening days trapped unaware
Poor Sorrow
Mopes like a caged owl—is Despair.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER.

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Close-ups in the Coal Fields

The following report of conditions among the striking miners in the coal fields of West Virginia, Kentucky and western Pennsylvania is based on the notebook jottings made during a first-hand investigation in those districts undertaken by the Federal Council of Churches. No changes have been made except that certain names have been omitted owing to the fact that much of the material is of a confidential nature.—THE EDITORS.

ARRIVED at the town of W—— in July and drove out to nearby coal camps, accompanied by Mr. C——, an experienced social worker, and the Reverend T——, both of whom are old residents and thoroughly acquainted with conditions in this area. Said about 25 percent of miners are Negroes, 50 percent foreigners or of foreign parents, with 25 percent native stock. Foreign strains are Italian, Polish, Austrian, Russian, Slav—brought in by coal companies during the War. Strike in May involving whole area due to wage cuts from twenty-five cents a ton to twenty cents a ton gross (about eight to ten cents taken out of this for powder, tools, doctor, etc.). Some companies compel workers to buy at company stores. Others compelled to do so by circumstances —get in debt—are given "scrip" or "company money" (some of which I obtained) which is good only at the company store. Many get no cash balance at all on their account after two weeks' work. Said starvation conditions prevailed even before last wage cut. P—— (social worker) said in some miners' families where potatoes are the main diet the parents let children eat the potatoes —parents eating the peelings. Many miners went to work after such a breakfast or without any. Would get sick and become a charge "on the county" at the hospital. In other cases not a thing in house to eat—father would go to work, dig coal half a day, be paid in company scrip which he gave to his wife who came to the mine for it. She would then buy food at the company store and send some in to him at the mine and get some dinner for the family.

At W——, John, a striking miner, took me to see the company houses. I selected typical sections of the "camp" for inspection. The houses are mostly located on steep side hills approached by rickety steps and walks, broken boards. The houses are dirty, have leaky roofs, no rails on steep back steps, falling plaster, splintery floors, broken stoops. The drinking water is obtained at a distance from a spring that goes dry at times. Called at a house. The wife had a tragic look. A two-year-old child came in naked except for a rag secured about its loins with a safety pin, dirty with coal dust, distended abdomen and thin legs indicating undernourishment. He looked like the pictures of starving children made familiar by the Near East Relief. They had a patch of garden, but no sugar or jars for canning. The rent is $5 a month (with lights), two rooms, which means one room for a kitchen, and one room with two double beds accommodating this family of man, wife and four children.

I inspected the open spring where the drinking water is obtained. It comes from the side of a hill. There is a road, a row of company houses and outside toilets just above it. I talked to two miners who, grimy with coal dust, had stopped for a drink at the end of the day's work at this sole source of water supply. They said they were now working four days a week—about $3 a day. "Hope it will get better after a while." There were four cases of typhoid fever at next coal camp. My guide said he lived there and was continuing to use the water —"What else can we do? It's the only water there is."

Interviewed a prominent operator who has been in the business forty years. Said that he has never seen the industry in such bad condition as at present. Impossible for an operator who desires to pay fair wages to do so. His business is taken away from him by those who pay lower wages or are ready to cut their men again and again in order to get the business. Said he is not surprised at widespread labor unrest. "When men see their children actually suffering for want of food, they get desperate and will stop at nothing." Said unless this wage cutting is stopped and conditions improved the miners may be led by some irresponsible leader "who doesn't care about his own life or anyone's else to armed revolt—these men when aroused to that pitch might shoot even on troops." He disapproved of evictions from company houses as only adding bitterness and fuel to the flames. He favored a system of organized collective bargaining with labor unions which would cover the whole industry and stabilize wages on a decent standard. He said, "Unless these conditions are dealt with in an adequate way *now*, we are going to see developments which will be a disgrace to the intelligence of America."

Learned from an authoritative source that the serious strike which occurred was caused by "starvation wages," which in turn were forced on the men on account of the ruthless competition among the operators. The incident was cited of the representative of a large purchaser of coal who arrived in town authorized by his company to pay $1.25 a ton for coal. He was waited upon at his hotel by

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one local operator after another, offering coal at lower and lower figures, until he placed his order at seventy cents a ton. This was far below cost of production. The wages of the miners were then cut once more. In desperation the men struck.

Proceeded to A——, where I called on a number of the 106 families who were to be evicted from their houses the following morning owing to strike situation. The general appearance of this camp was less ugly than some others because of the presence of grass and trees. Inspected about fifteen typical houses. Have gas for light and cooking. Many of the houses constructed of rough boards and studding. All I saw had broken stoops and rails, rough, splintery floors. Some had plaster walls and ceilings, broken and very dirty. Others had wood-sealed walls and ceilings, also dirty. Outside toilets also in insanitary condition and lack of repair. Men said company cleans them once in every three or four years. They looked it. Water supply at pump at end of camp and at well "up the hill." Inspected the latter after a stiff climb to reach it. A broken curb-box only half covers the opening. No curb apparatus of any kind. Each family brings its own bucket and rope by which to lower it. A pigsty is located on the hill above this well.

Called on family of president of local union. Three rooms, rent $6 a month. Eight fine-looking children. Said they owed less than two weeks' rent ($3). Due to be evicted the next morning because they are strikers. Their household goods will be carried down the road several miles (beyond company property) in the morning and dumped at the side of the state road. Sullen looks among these miners. One wonders what may happen.

At union headquarters, it was stated that the wholesale evictions had been postponed by injunction. The union leader who served the papers on the companies involved had just returned. He said he walked through rows of rifles at one mine. At another the superintendent "talked ugly" with his hand on the butt of his revolver. The papers were served. Nine families, however, at other points had been "set out on the road." I saw the committee which was in session at headquarters trying to find houses or shacks for them. Five had been arranged for in another "hollow." It was growing dark. The committee lacked funds. As I left headquarters it was still a question what was to become of the other four families waiting with their furniture and their children by the roadside as night fell.

Almost incredible brutalities have been reported on the part of constables during evictions, one woman's baby being born dead after she was kicked by a constable. Two other women are said to have died as a result of eviction proceedings. Blood has been shed in other places in this district. Two "scabs" were killed by a rifle shot from the hillside as they were going in to work at a struck mine.

At a strike meeting this afternoon a drunken and abusive assistant foreman, during a struggle in the crowd, fired three times and shot an elderly woman in the abdomen. Union leaders with whom I talked felt the shot was intended for the young union leader who was speaking, but struck the woman by accident. As she was brought to the hospital (a doctor whose house was near the scene refusing to look at her), she is reported to have remarked, "I'm glad they got me instead of the young man."

Interviewed an old miner, a splendid character well known to local citizens, who accompanied me. He is now working for large coal company of nationally prominent ownership. Said United Mine Workers have not actively attempted reorganization at this time because the two great coal companies whose owners are high in political and financial life of the nation "are the worst enemies of the union" and too powerful for the U. M. W. to fight with its weakened resources. He said, however, that discontent is general and undoubtedly most of the men would strike at this moment under any leadership which offered itself except for fear of being put out of their houses and having no food for their children. "They are only working because of fear—it is practically involuntary servitude." Said company guards have within recent weeks beaten up man after man and broken up a parade of strikers although it was marching on a state road (which passes through this company-owned town). Said pressure is brought by superintendent to compel men to trade at the company store where prices are higher than outside.

Interviewed another miner who stated that the superintendent repeatedly warned him that he was "not taking enough out of the company store," and he replied he wasn't making enough to buy more. Had to keep up his payments on taxes, fire and life insurance. Superintendent said, "That's nothing to me. You got to take more out of the company store." The superintendent also tried to make him move into a company house, or if he wouldn't move he'd have to pay rent of $8 a month anyway. He refused, and was discharged. Man and wife quoted figures at company store ranging from 20 percent higher than outside stores.

Visited T——, arriving at close of a strike meeting under the National Miners' Union, in an open lot. Interviewed the president of the local, and a group of strikers. They said the United Mine Workers was "only a company union" and "had been dead since 1922," charged corruption within its official ranks and felt that it had only "sold out to the bosses." A number of the men interviewed had previously been members of the United Mine Workers for many years. They recited the low pay and poor conditions which had caused the strike. "All we ask," said their leader, "is a little bit bigger piece of bread." Families evicted from company houses were living in this field in strag-

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gling tents. Pitiful heaps of household furniture lay dumped on the ground covered as best they could. How did they live? "The National Miners' Union is sending a little food from the wholesale direct." For the rest, groups go to nearby farms and ask for anything they can get. "We didn't have anything when we struck and we don't have anything now but we get along pretty good—except for the children, which is the greatest burning issue."

On the basis of these immediate observations in the coal fields it becomes evident that two things are most imperative: first, that adequate food and shelter must be supplied to all who are in need, regardless of whether they are strikers or not and without regard to their political beliefs, and second, that there must be a more statesmanlike organization of the bituminous-coal industry itself, intelligent planning and control, the elimination of cutthroat competition and overproduction, the recognition of effective labor unions to stabilize at least a minimum wage which will be adequate for the miner and his family. This would give the many well meaning employers who want to pay fair wages a chance to do so without losing business through the destructive competition now prevailing.

JAMES MYERS.

Calling on Coolidge

AT BRIDGEWATER CORNERS a road branches south, a narrow, winding road, beside which flows a shallow winding brook. Right and left rise steep green hills, with the trunks of birches here and there, silver threads among the green. The valley is fertile, velvety and wild, the kind of lost and lonely place that makes one want to stop the car, and get out, and lie in the long grass, and forget everything.

For a few miles the brook and the road wind together, in blue sunlight or green shadow. Then there is a turn in the road, and the weathered flanks of an old barn. Around the turn there are more buildings, and an open space—a triangle of turf, in the middle of which stands a white sign with big blue letters, "Coolidge Homestead." It points toward a smaller road, that runs uphill past a general store, a church and a long immaculately painted farmhouse. On either side of the road are a dozen or more parked automobiles, with license plates from Rhode Island, New York, Massachusetts, and of course New Hampshire and Vermont. Beside the cars, on the steps of the church, in front of the white farmhouse, all up and down the road, people are standing in groups, or slowly walking in pairs. Good, plain American men and women, in shirtsleeves or sensible cotton dresses; people with coats under their arms and cameras in their hands and handkerchiefs tucked in between their collars and their necks. They have come—hundreds of miles, some of them—to catch a glimpse of a real live ex-President. They come here, and park their small black sedans for an hour or two, every day, all summer long, at the rate of five hundred to a thousand a day, and stare at this goldfish bowl, and catch a glimpse of the plain, the good, the sensible and famous goldfish in the bowl, and go away again.

As I park my car alongside of theirs at Plymouth, the pilgrims present the appearance of a crowd that has turned up after the fire has been put out, and that still hangs around, talking about it, looking in no particular direction, hoping vaguely that perhaps it may break out again.

They are patient and inattentive. A woman is sitting in the back seat of a sedan reading the society section of a Sunday newspaper. A lanky man in golf stockings puts a new film pack into his camera. People wander into the little church, and I follow them. A semicircle of plain wooden pews, a small foot organ, an American flag. Suddenly someone puts his head in the door and whispers loudly, "He's coming!" I rush out. Around the west corner of the farmhouse something on two legs turns and disappears. The scattered crowd stands still, with heads pointing toward that corner. Slowly, without unseemly haste, with a show of not really caring, little groups walk west up the road, to see what may be seen around the corner of the house. They move quietly, carefully, as if afraid that any sudden motion would scare the rare animal back into its lair.

We pass the corner of the house. Long grass, some apple trees—that is all. For two or three minutes we stand staring at the apple trees and the long grass. Then, from an invisible rear door, emerges a figure in a blue suit. It walks a few paces and stops. It is Mr. Coolidge. On his head is a smart tan hat. In his mouth is a cigar in a white holder. His hands are clasped behind his back. His back is broad, almost athletic; his face, the little of it we can see, is brown, almost sunburned. He seems younger, and broader, and stronger than we expected. He looks calmly at the newly cut fields of his farm, at the steep wooded hills beyond them, at the speckled dots that are cows on a high pasture. He does not see, or pretends not to see, the fifty pilgrims on the road behind him, the hundred eyes boring into his calm blue back. Then he turns to the right, and disappears behind the house, his hands still clasped behind his back.

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We drift down the road, hoping that he will emerge at the other end. He does. This time a man in a leather jacket is with him. They examine a high hedge for a long while, almost putting their noses into it. They turn around and look at the grass. The man in the leather jacket picks up an apple, and throws it away absent-mindedly. Mr. Coolidge takes the cigar out of his mouth and flicks the ash. His blue coat is unbuttoned. Between the lower pockets of his waistcoat stretches a gold watch-chain. In a few minutes he saunters away behind the house again, with his hands clasped loosely behind his back.

We all saw him. We saw everything that he did. But he didn't see us. Or tried not to. Or has become accustomed to living his life as openly as in an aquarium.

There is no fence between the road and the Coolidge Homestead. A little wire strung slackly here and there on iron tubes. And behind them, a short row of old granite posts. The house is ten feet from the road; the ex-President is ten feet from his people. To the west of the house are a few unpruned apple trees, and much unmowed green grass, and a patch of parsley, and some more beans. Farther up the road is a barn. A sign on it catches my eye—"Coolidge." I walk up to read the rest of it. "Coolidge Home Town Cheese, Made in the Old Fashioned Way." From the barn comes an old-fashioned cowey, cheesey smell. Across the road are the remains of a rubbish fire. In the ashes lies the corpse of one galosh, burned white.

The farmhouse has a bay window, with some kind of plant showing behind it. Next comes a narrow, covered porch, with five chairs. No one is rocking in them. A shadow passes across a window, the shadow of someone moving about inside the house. The roof of the house and of the barn, which seems to have been made over into a garage, is covered with some sort of greenish fireproof tile. In front of the yard at the east end, where the man in the leather jacket threw the apple, there are a few stalks of hollyhock.

Someone is coming down the road behind me. I turn aside. It is Mrs. Coolidge, back from a walk, trim and vigorous, leading a beautiful chow dog. She ties the dog to a tree by a long rope, and goes indoors. Someone in the crowd calls the dog discreetly, and he comes up to be patted. In a minute Mrs. Coolidge can be seen through the glass of the bay window, typing.

I take another look at the church across the road. The American flag is set up on a stand, like a Christmas tree, in a pew on the left. A man and two children are sitting in the pew. The man's face expresses wonder and a foolish smile of simple, self-satisfied pleasure. They are sitting in Mr. Coolidge's own pew. They get up. I take their place in Mr. Coolidge's own pew. The rack for the hymn and prayer books has no books in it. But it is not empty. Tucked into its narrow space are a dozen little soiled and rumpled pieces of paper—scraps torn from notebooks, visiting cards, the flaps of envelopes with the gum still on them. Here the American people have, individually, called to themselves the attention of him who was once their ruler. Most of the messages are no more than names and dates. Some say briefly, "Greetings to Mr. and Mrs. Coolidge," followed by a pencil signature. "Doughlis W. Bowden, Thomas Van Wagner, from Bronx, New York. Good luck." Others are more personal: "Delighted to have seen you and wife in person. Mrs. Louis DuBois, 73 Indian Boulevard, Brooklyn." The prize in this homely, touching collection reads as follows: "Mrs. E. E. Brown. Mrs. L. W. MacGlauflin. Born 1889. July 4. Twins."

There is a stir in the road, and I rush out. Mr. Coolidge has evidently made a sortie. Here he is again, walking hastily down the middle of the road, in full view and within reach of his admirers. A bolder man than the rest of us steps forward, holding out his hand. "I'm Dr. Shore, of Boston. . . ." "Glad to meet you." Mr. Coolidge walks on. A woman's voice: "Mr. Coolidge, may I take your picture?" "You can if you can ketch me." The accent is too good to be true, as rich as Will Rogers' imitation of it. Mr. Coolidge walks on, up the steps and into the house. I wonder if the woman with the camera was able to ketch him.

It all seems to be over for the day. The crowd drifts back to its cars. A sort of plain-clothes traffic cop with a huge rustic umbrella stands ready to direct traffic if necessary. Before leaving, the pilgrims from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York and points west go into the general store for postcards and souvenirs. A huge shield juts out from the store's porch. "Birthplace of Calvin Coolidge." To the same post are hung several large advertisements of Doan's Kidney Pills, which cure backache, headache and other aches. The store is a genuine Vermont general store, with an iron stove and sad-colored candies under glass. One corner of the counter is devoted to Coolidgeiana—postcards of Mr. Coolidge on horseback or in a rocking chair, of the Coolidge farmhouse, of old John Coolidge in the last days of his life. And a collection of ashtrays, cigarette lighters, paper weights, pencils, cups, saucers, watch fobs, all incrusted with little silver plaques reading "Coolidge Boyhood Home, Plymouth, Vermont."

In the room just back of the store Calvin Coolidge was born. An album lies on the table. One thousand, five hundred and eight signatures of visitors, many of them Mr. and Mrs., or So and So and wife, since a week ago. Seedy nondescript chairs, and a leather couch on which—this room has not yet achieved the dignified status of a museum—a baby is now being changed by its mother. A President is born, and perhaps, here right under our eyes, yet another President is being changed.

ROBERT LITTELL.

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The Challenge of the Five Year Plan

ONE OF the chief results of the success of the Five Year Plan has been to force the outside world to settle its attitude toward Soviet Russia. It is a strange and disturbing fact that the outside world should for so long have had no settled attitude, and that even now it seems reluctant to adopt one. The mere geographical position and economic possibilities of Russia, apart from the political innovations in which she is engaging, should have made it imperative to arrive at a settled point of view. Yet for the thirteen years of the existence of the Soviet regime, the Western world has been satisfied to rely upon facile formulas and to contemplate the purely superficial and spectacular aspect of events.

The inauguration of the Five Year Plan made at first little difference to the general refusal to treat Russia seriously. The scheme was stigmatized as sheer Bolshevik bluff and as megalomania raised to the *n*th power. The first perception of the reality of the Plan and of the dramatic force with which it is being pushed came only when the collectivization of agriculture led to conflicts in the villages reminiscent of those of the civil war. But while the "liquidation" of the *kulaks* as a class roused the indignation of the world, it failed to disturb its basic indifference to Russia. It was left to the sudden appearance last summer of Russian grain on the world market to awaken the world to a consciousness of the reality and magnitude of the Plan and to a revaluation of the country in which it was being carried out.

The resumption of Russia's foreign trade after the stabilizing of the revolution in 1921 brought with it a series of surprises, perplexities and disappointments. When, during the War and afterwards, people were discussing the possibility of resuming trade with Russia, they usually assumed that the character of this trade would be similar to that of pre-war times, that is, would be an exchange of the agricultural produce of Russia for the manufactured goods of the West. But this double expectation has never come anywhere near realization. The great supplies of grain and other agricultural produce which were to have come from Russia have never materialized. And while, of course, the United States, Canada and the Argentine had no reason to feel aggrieved at this disappearance of Russia from the wheat market, Great Britain and other grain-importing countries have been genuinely disappointed. Much more widespread and certainly more sincere has been the disappointment caused by the failure of the other expectation.

Ever since Russia discovered that she could obtain no credits, she has limited her imports to such manufactured goods as are absolutely essential to the reëquipment of her broken industries. The further trade developed, the clearer it became that this refusal to allow manufactured goods to be imported into the country was no accident, nor a mere temporary expedient. Soviet Russia was plainly resolved to make a completely new departure in the world of international exchange.

Expressed in the most general terms, this new departure consists in the principle that foreign trade is no longer left free and unrestricted, but is rigidly regulated and becomes a planned trade. Imports and exports henceforth take their place in and become a function of the planned economy of the State; that is to say, they are conducted not for the satisfaction of the manifold needs of the population, but as an integral part of the reconstruction of the country. In these circumstances, imports are given a predominant position, while exports serve mainly to pay for imports. Another implication of this new departure is the change of the character and structure of both imports and exports. The importation of consumers' goods, that is, of manufactured articles, which used to total more than half of the pre-war imports into the country, are now reduced to a mere 10 percent, the remaining 90 percent being strictly producers' goods, goods required for completing the industrialization of the country, such as plant, machines and industrial raw materials. Exports, on the other hand, which in the old days were strictly specialized and limited to foodstuffs, agricultural raw materials, timber and furs, now include anything and everything which can be marketed, from wheat to manganese ore, from flax and furs to anthracite coal, from pulpwood and matches to electrical bulbs.

In 1913 the value of exports amounted to over 1,500 million rubles; while in 1928-29 (measured in pre-war prices), it amounted to only 700 million. The decrease of exports will become still more serious if the reader will realize that the general level of production, both industrial and agricultural, has increased in the same period by approximately 30 percent. There is another and probably more adequate way of expressing the same phenomenon. Regarded as a proportion of the general level of production, exports will now be found to have been reduced by nearly two-thirds. Before the War, Russia exported over 8 percent of her annual production, whereas in 1929 this proportion had fallen to less than 3 percent.

This circumstance is worrying the Bolsheviks a good deal, for the volume of exports sets the limit for imports, and any curtailment of the latter must bring about a retardation of the tempo of industrialization. Resorting to their customary man-

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ner of solving urgent state problems by "shock methods," that is, by concentration of every effort upon one particular "front," the directors of the state departments concerned have been frenziedly engaged in forcing and pushing exportation of everything which can be removed from the market and withdrawn from consumption.

Russia has now none of the motives which generally stimulate foreign trade. There is no overproduction, no need for getting rid of an unmarketable surplus and no necessity for stabilizing prices on the internal market. With the exception of timber, oil and expensive furs, Russian exports represent not a surplus, but goods withdrawn from the internal market. Even in the case of grain, of which there is no scarcity at present and the production of which is some 12 percent higher than before the War, when Russia exported 18 million quarters of wheat annually, there is as yet no really exportable surplus. The underlying motive of the ambitious scheme for increasing the cereal area and the yield of crops is obviously to enable Russia to regain and surpass her old eminence in the grain market. But the result of these efforts ought not to be felt in the world market for some years; for even a very considerable increase in production should and could be totally assimilated in the country first in improving the quality of the people's bread and then as fodder for the cattle.

Even such a bird's-eye view of the tendencies of Russian foreign trade as is here presented reveals the fact that, whatever its potentialities may be, it is at present small in quantity, represents a maximum effort and runs contrary to the basic development of Russian national economy. Add to this the fact that it has a balance unfavorable to Russia, that the volume of imports exceeds that of exports, a difference that had to be made good by bills, credits and shipments of gold, and it will be seen that the alarm that has arisen in foreign countries at the expansion of the Russian export trade has little justification. Such apprehension as can be reckoned genuine—and a good deal of it has been palpably factitious—has to be explained by special circumstances.

It is due, in the first place, to the fact that expansion took place in a period of catastrophic fall in world prices, a downward movement which Russia's readiness to get rid of her goods at any price did little to arrest, and secondly, to the discovery that Russia's state monopoly of foreign trade has greatly intensified the impact of Russia's exports on the world market. But the attempt made by a section of the press to render Russian exports—of wheat in particular—responsible for the fall of world prices is too absurd for serious discussion, and is negatived by the simple fact that this fall began nearly a year before Russian wheat reappeared on the world market.

The fall of prices, instead of being due to the appearance of Russian exports, exercised rather an unfavorable effect upon them. Russia had to export a considerably larger quantity of goods to pay for her imports than she would have exported had there been no glut in the market. It has to be explained that as an importer Russia doubtless gained by the fall in prices, but not greatly, since the prices of her main imports, plant, machines, tools, were only slightly affected by the slump. As an exporter she was badly hit; for her exports, practically without exception, were raw materials the prices for which went down to rock bottom. Moreover, in order to find a sale in this glutted market, Russian prices had to be still further cut.

It was the combination of these two factors, the determined expansion of her export trade and the ruthless cutting of prices, which made the world accuse Russia of dumping. Yet the charge of dumping has never really been made out. The only point definitely established is that Russian goods were sold below world prices. But even were it possible to establish beyond doubt the fact that Russia is selling her goods below cost price, and is actually losing money on every ton of grain, oil and manganese and on every standard of timber she exports, this would only throw the more striking light on her need for foreign *valuta,* which is so urgent that she is willing to pay heavily for it.

The Five Year Plan is a child of revolution and "big business" and so naturally must have its slogan. It has, indeed, many slogans, but the one which expresses essentially the spirit of the "drive" is usually translated, "Let us overtake and outstrip," a reference, of course, to success in catching up with and in surpassing the production of the great capitalist countries. What concerns me at present, however, is not so much the interpretation of the Bolshevik aims as the amazing fact that the Bolshevik propaganda, which aimed at arousing the enthusiasm of Russian workers for the Plan, has succeeded in infecting public opinion in the West, which seems now inclined to believe not only in the Bolshevik intention to outstrip capitalism but even in the possibility.

This is obviously caused by the fact that Russia has succeeded in establishing a record rate of industrial development. Hitherto the highest known rate of annual increment had been recorded in the development of the United States in the second half of the nineteenth century. Immediately before the world depression, even the United States rate of annual increment was no more than 4 percent; while in other countries it was even less. When it appeared that the rate of annual increment in Soviet Russia in the first two years of the Plan's operation averaged 24 percent, the idea of Russia's catching up to the leading industrial countries began to look a good deal less fantastic than it originally appeared.

But a mere citation of annual increments is of no very great assistance in enabling observers to compare Russia's potentialities of production with those

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of the most highly developed industrial countries. Even if the annual increments of the first two years are taken at their face value, and even if those of the final years double these, then the distance covered will be admittedly considerable, but the goal, the running past the capitalist world, will be practically as far off as ever. If, for example, we assume that Russian production is only one-tenth that of the leading capitalist countries (a very liberal estimate), Russia will have to increase her production tenfold to reach the present level of her capitalist rivals; even so, unless we also assume that the latter's level of production will meantime remain stationary, the time in which Russia can overtake them must be still further postponed.

How severely Russia is actually handicapped in the industrial race can be grasped only if the test of per-capita production is applied. Take the generation of electrical power. Here, in sheer level of production, the United States is twenty times ahead of the U. S. S. R.; but if production is considered per head of the population, the U. S. A. is over thirty times ahead of the U. S. S. R. Even when this test is applied, the difference is not adequately expressed, for the relative dimensions of the countries must also be taken into account. A comparison, for instance, of the length of the railways in the U. S. A. with those of the U. S. S. R. is impressive (250,000 miles as compared to 50,000 miles); but what is far more significant is the fact that in the U. S. A. on every 625 square miles there are 31.8 miles of railways, while in Russia there are only 2.2 miles.

In the atmosphere of exaggerated expectation caused by the success of the Plan, people are apt to forget that Russian economy has entered a transition period in which socialized state industry, though dominant, exists side by side with privately owned and privately run industry. In other words, they fail to realize that while a great deal of Lenin's New Economic Policy has been thrown overboard, it is not completely obsolete. The socialized section of Soviet economics is not only still permeated with the principles and methods of capitalist economy, but a considerable, though diminishing, section of national economy in Russia is still predominantly capitalist in character. It is not easy to determine how great this section is, for the division between the socialized and privately owned sections is not clear, but leaves room for a variety of hybrid combinations. At any rate, it is obvious that the Five Year Plan operates chiefly in the former section and exercises a looser and more indirect influence on the latter. Thus, the annual increments of production achieved by the Plan need a further correction if they are to represent progress reached by the entire national economy.

The indices of the Five Year Plan, it must be remembered, apply not to the total volume of Russian industrial production, but only to that of the large state-controlled industries; outside these there remain the small private and coöperative industries, the individual peasants and the *kustars* (artisans). What proportion of national economy is thus unrecorded by the indices of the Plan is difficult to state with exactitude. In his book "The Economic Life of Soviet Russia," Professor Calvin B. Hoover makes an attempt to calculate what was the complete annual increment of industrial production for 1929. For the Plan it is given as 23.7 percent. Professor Hoover reduces this figure to 16.8 percent on the ground that "large-scale state industry produces only from 70 to 75 percent of the total industrial produce." He further declares that a similar correction must be made in respect of agriculture, which would reduce the figure of the annual increment still lower.

Another way of arriving at the relative proportions of the national economy embraced and excluded from the Plan would be to compare the amount of Russia's total national income with the sum which is annually mobilized for the purpose of the Plan. For 1931 the national income is estimated at 49,000 million rubles, while the sum embraced by the Finance Plan is only 31,750 million rubles. This permits us to assume that 37 percent of the national economy is still outside the control of the Plan, a figure which goes far to corroborate the estimate made by Professor Hoover, who may also be right in making a further discount to meet the low quality of Soviet goods.

These qualifications must not, of course, be unduly stressed. The annual increment under the Plan, however seriously it may be discounted, will remain remarkable enough, marking probably a record in economic history. What the qualifications are intended to prove, and what I claim they do prove, is that the alarming and almost hysterical exaggerations of the consequences of the Plan cannot be borne out by the facts. Contrary to all prophecies made by some prominent captains of industry, I maintain that however successful the Five Year Plan proves, it will never make Russia a formidable competitor to the more highly industrialized countries.

The capacity of the Russian internal market for the consumption of goods will grow more rapidly than the production of such goods. This tendency has not yet had an opportunity of clearly revealing itself; but even now there are strong indications that production, even at the accelerated tempo of the Plan, will fail to keep pace with the growing demand for goods. This disproportion between demand and supply will apply not only to consumers' goods, but even to the production of the means of production. It is, of course, more evident in the case of such necessities as wearing apparel. The increase in production of these goods has been considerable; in fact, it has been quadrupled and more in many cases. And yet the needs for these goods is not only greater than in pre-war times, but is growing more pronounced the more such goods are brought to the market.

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The same story of an awakening appetite for goods, and a consequent expansion of the internal market, can be told of any industry. The whole process of industrialization in Russia is being stimulated by the irresistible demands for a higher standard of living. This is the explanation. of the frenzied increases of the Plan year by year and month by month. To ascribe these increases of an already swollen program to an intention of swamping the foreign market is to take a purely superficial view; as a matter of fact they have no relation to the foreign market and are caused solely by the insatiable demands of the internal market. The necessity, for instance, of adjusting the production of iron and steel to the ever increasing demands of the new mechanized agriculture not only upset the metallurgical section of the Plan but also threw out of gear the program for coal mining and electric power; and this new standard of production, in its turn, made inevitable a doubling of the engineering program and a complete reorganization of transport. This necessity for raising production and increasing its tempo has naturally its repercussions on both the amount and character of imports and exports. To keep pace with such development, more machines and more equipment had to be brought into the country, and these imports had to be paid for by sending goods out of the country. These were not goods *produced* for export, such as timber, furs, oil, but goods *withdrawn* from consumption.

The vogue of the Five Year Plan has had the effect of making "planning economy" a popular cry. The fact that a backward country, unaided, was capable of reaching an unusually high tempo of industrial production was attributed to the element of planning. Yet its possibilities and limitations have yet to be discovered. The Bolshevik claim to have invented a true "perspective plan," that is, a plan which can foresee and organize economic activity for a number of years in advance, has so far not been made out. Their original Five Year Plan has never really been adhered to. It supplied merely a definition of destination and signposts along the road. The Plan in operation, the actual program of work, is furnished by the so-called "Control Figures," which prescribe the concrete tasks for the current year. Even these control figures are changed and modified in accordance with needs of the day and the actual forces at work. Yet only a prejudiced person would deny that planning, even in its present inchoate form, has played and is playing a remarkable part in shaping the national economy of the U. S. S. R.

How powerful and how creative is the principle of planning cannot better be realized than by a recollection that only ten years have passed since it was predicted on all hands that the promulgation of the New Economic Policy was opening wide the gates for a capitalist development of Russia. Any doubts which may have existed as to the real meaning of this policy—its double recognition of the defeat of communism by the peasant and the inevitability of a return to capitalism—have now been completely dissipated by the publication in Pravda, on March 21, of certain notes made by Lenin prior to its promulgation. To the question whether the New Economic Policy constitutes a return to capitalism, Lenin returns a very frank answer. "Our too hasty, too direct and unprepared communism was caused by the War and by the impossibility of either obtaining goods [from abroad] or of starting the factories. There are many stages of retreat. It is possible to loosen the rope without cutting it; let it go; ease it." These entries made in his notebook solely for his own use are of necessity mere shorthand hints: but they cannot be called enigmatic, and they leave no doubt that Lenin realized all the implications of the New Economic Policy. Yet they prove conclusively that he was not giving up the hope of establishing communism. It was just at this time that he proclaimed his belief that the preservation of Soviet rule and of planned economy would win ultimate victory.

The immediate result of the N. E. P. was exactly what was expected. Capitalism returned and proceeded to recover its lost position in town and country. But the result of the subsequent struggle between the Soviet state and the Nepmen was the reëstablishment of communism, no longer "hasty, direct and unprepared," but in full vigor, flexible and well entrenched.

To explain how this reëstablishment came about would be to write a history of that all-important decade in Russia which we have just lived through. But it would perhaps be sufficient to state that it has been due mainly to the preservation by the Soviet government of the "commanding heights," the plan economy and its most valuable expression, the monopoly of foreign trade. Had the Soviet government renounced this monopoly even for a short period, there can be no doubt that capitalism would have made such inroads and would have so firmly entrenched itself that, to adopt Lenin's metaphor, the rope, even if merely loosened, would have strangled communism. On the other hand, without the principle of planning, the Soviet government would never have accumulated even the initial resources to start reconstruction.

There is a good deal of loose talk about the menace to capitalism of Russian foreign trade, and the need, therefore, of an embargo to be placed upon Russian exports. Assuming even that trade conducted by a state monopoly may be regarded as in some sense menacing, I submit that the influence which world trade may have on Russia is likely to be much more considerable and much more "menacing." Some of the Bolshevik leaders scout the idea that the Soviet state has anything to fear from contact with the foreign markets; they believe that the monopoly of foreign trade is a sufficient safeguard against the ebb and flow of world economic influences. The effect which the fall of prices in

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the world market has had on the Soviet balance of trade is, however, likely to disturb their complacency. But perhaps they need not be unduly disturbed; for their adversaries are more likely than not to throw away this opportunity of gaining an influence in Russia through the medium of foreign trade, in the same way that they missed their former opportunity to shape her economic development by supplying her with capital for reconstruction.

The popular notion of regarding the expansion of the Russian export trade as a challenge thrown out to the great capitalist countries of the world is quite fallacious. The challenge of the Five Year Plan, when it is made, will come not in the sphere of trade but of ideas and of organization. That a contest between capitalism and socialism is historically inevitable seems probable enough; it will be a trial of strength in which either system will seek to prove that its own theory of production and distribution is the more effective.

In the meantime, one is tempted to suggest that capitalism, in particular in Great Britain, is in danger of sacrificing its own efficiency in a foredoomed attempt to prevent Russian industrialization. The theory that an industrialized country has less capacity for absorbing foreign exports than an economically backward country is quite unsound. The cases of Germany and Japan have demonstrated clearly that industrialization awakens demands, creates new ones and increases the purchasing power of the people; and manufacturing countries have much more to hope from an industrialized Russia as a buyer than to fear from her as a competitor.

MICHAEL FARBMAN.

The Department of Public Words

UPON REQUEST, Elmer Durkin produced a package of Firemen's Friend smoking tobacco for Lester Quigley, bookkeeper for the Woppington Supply Company.

"In these uncertain times," said Mr. Quigley apologetically, "rigid economy seems desirable."

"Sure, Quig. Some of our best people are keeping kissable with grade D cooking tobacco." The newsdealer was always glad to see Quigley who was a timid soul and easily outtalked. "The ghost is still walking at your joint I hope."

"It's all right so far, Elmer, but things are very slow in the building line. You can't tell what might happen."

"What a help to papa you turned out to be! Just when business needs loose spenders you act like you just blew in from Glasgow."

"If a person could be certain of their job, we might take a chance."

"That's where unemployment insurance would do its stuff."

"You don't mean the 'dole'!"

"Dole," said Elmer, "is a horrid word. It's a name you pin on the other fellow's scheme. According to Hoover, relief for the unemployed is a dole if you nick Andy Mellon for part of the jack, but if you slip a guy two bits for a mug of Java and a pair of sinkers, it's the American spirit of initiative and self-reliance.

"Herby is funny that way. When the government loosens up half a billion smackers to buck the Board of Trade and loses everything but the old hair shirt, that's farm relief. When we hand the manufacturers four billion berries' worth of gravy, that's protection to American industries. When we dig down in the sock to see the farmers through the dry spell, that's agricultural rehabilitation. When we ease up on the foreign debts, that's moratorium. But no jobless man can gouge a jit from the national treasury because that would be a dole. That's his story and he sticks to it.

"Local government and private charity must handle this job, the Great Humanitarian says. For some reason I can't dope, it's not a dole unless they ship it from Washington. I don't get that, Quig. Suppose you had a run of bad breaks and had to call on the Woppington poor fund for a handout. A snooty dame would poke in her beezer and pester the little woman with questions; does your husband drink? and do you buy the cheaper cuts of parsnips? and how come little Susie don't look more skinny? It might listen kind of doleful to you, at that.

"Anyhow that's what they've wished on us for another hard winter. Remember last year H. H. picked this Arthur Woods to do the emergency relieving, but it didn't work out so hot. He issued ten acres of cheery words, but he couldn't give us anything but love. He talked about all the public work that was going to be pulled off to relieve the depression, but that was mostly horse feathers. The dirt is that Arthur got to squawking for federal aid and had to be taken for a ride. I don't know, maybe he just ran out of language.

"Now what have we got but a swell new department of public words with Walter Gifford as the head man. Wouldn't you know he'd take a telephone man! Did you see the flock of big birds on that committee?—Eastman, Strawn, Bill Green, Barney Baruch, Alex Legge. There's not a guy in the whole bunch who wouldn't give his last word to feed a starving child. A hungry man would get a big wallop out of reading those ritzy names. He couldn't ask for better reading matter, except maybe a bill of fare.

"So these good eggs will coöperate and coördinate and coagulate. Come October they'll begin to shake us down for all the charity rackets that were ever thought up—gyp bazaars, tag days, ball games, box fights and community-chest drives. The towns and cities will have to come across for millions. And there won't be enough, at that—not unless the unemployed give up this ornery habit of eating chow.

"That's the setup, but of course Congress might

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spill a few beans—there's another jam the Great White Father is in. The moratorium thing has got to be settled by the middle of December. He'd like to call a special session to help the hungry Germans, but he's afraid those pests would try to help the hungry Americans. And what lousy little four-letter word would that be, Quig?"

"It's very discouraging," Mr. Quigley admitted. "They told us prosperity was just around the corner, but something seems to be keeping it."

"Maybe they said just around the coroner."

FELIX RAY.

What Dotage Will Not Vanity Maintain?

Earl Carroll Vanities. Earl Carroll Theatre, August 27, 1931.

DURING the past two or three seasons a great shadow has fallen on our theatre and many have wondered what is going to happen to it. In view of this fact, America's Greatest Revue, Earl Carroll Vanities (Ninth Edition), with The Most Beautiful Girls in the World, Dances and Ensembles staged by George Hale, Dialogue by Ralph Spence and Eddie Welch, Dialogue staged and revised by Edgar MacGregor; for the creation of the World's Largest Legitimate Theatre and Most Perfect Production Center, the architect, George Keister, architectural design of the exterior and interior, Joseph J. Babolnay, Thomas W. Lamb supervising architect, O. Kroll engineer; Color Schemes and Furniture Designs, Don Riha; Wall Coverings, Carpets, all furniture and decorations Wanamaker, under the direction of Mel Moore; Weatherstripping by A B C Weatherstrip Corporation; Elevators by A. B. See Elevator Company, Inc.; Music and Lyrics by Harold Adamson and Burton Lane; Orchestral Score by Domenico Savino; S. Haskel, Inc. for Granite; Kalametal Co. for Kalamein, Tinclad Bronze, Alleghany Metal Doors; Ballets by Gluck Sandor; Costumes by Vicente Minelli and Charles LeMaire, executed by Madame Arlington; Sidewalk Bridge by M. F. C. Shoring and Foundation Company, Inc.; Electric Mirrors by Metropolitan Electric Manufacturing Company; Settings by Hugh Willoughby, special settings created by Vicente Minelli; Burkstone work by Architectural Plastering Company; Illusions and Optical Effects by Prof. Max Teuber; Bronze Saddles by Newman Manufacturing Company; Technical Direction by Bernard Lohmuller; Miss Roth's song, "I'm in Circulation Again," by Max Lief, Nathaniel Lief and Michael H. Cleary, the scene written by Clifford Adams; Wrecking by Meyer Fine Wrecking Company; Heating by Gates Heating Company, Inc., though the Refrigeration is by Carrier Engineering Company; the Dinosaur for "Two Hundred Million Years Ago," dance by Lucille Page, Dinosaur created by Gustave Weidhaas, guidance of Chas. J. Lang of the Museum of Natural History; Hardware by G. Goldberg and Sons, Inc.; Membrane Waterproofing by Sobel and Kraus, Inc.; the Entire Production Directed and Produced by Earl Carroll—must, perhaps, require a comment.

That must surely be one of the longest and most complex of the sentences in modern American dramatic criticism, but so is all this functionalism by which we arrive at things in their functional capacity highly complicated, as complicatedly functional as the human liver or as simply so as the baby's diaper, what more could we ask? This newest theatre is luxurious, has comfortable and pretty-colored seats, and exhibits plenty of colored glass running here and there around the ceiling and sometimes the walls, with light transmitted to the audience, which is thus enabled to come in and go out. These lightings are in the most modern designs, streaks and spurts and circlings; the theatre is not uglier than many others, and the air of comfort is genuine, genuine to the point where nothing could be more sensible and also more Victorian—an age whose main idea trembled toward the assurance of comfort. The statement, however, that this is "the first theatre with a modern interior decorative scheme, following no period or style of embellishment, setting a style of decoration for this age, to be copied by future generations"—well, we must doubtless wait and see the generations.

We must list, however, some more supremacies in the Earl Carroll Theatre, as set forth in its program, in order that not only New Yorkers but yokels from quiet districts unable to come and stay at the Astor for a while may know what is happening in the field of art. Among the unique innovations and customs established in the Earl Carroll Theatre (replacing the Earl Carroll Theatre of 1922, at that time our stage white hope) are: the largest so-called legitimate theatre in the world, with 3,000 seats, and possibly the most costly of its kind, over $4,500,000; the first theatre to establish four-color circuits in the auditorium as well as upon the stage, enabling color effects, etc., and no footlights, etc.; the first theatre in the world to use a new light-control console, located in the orchestra just behind the orchestra conductor, etc.; the reading lamps on the backs of the seats, the first of their kind; the triple replacement of different orchestras or bands and scenes on the disappearing orchestra pit, solely created by Mr. Carroll, as was the first disappearing orchestra pit; a cooling system not only in the auditorium but on the stage; the first theatre without a box office, the ticket counter, with the ticket rack in view of patrons, is an indication of good faith; the first theatre to have an Orchid Room backstage for the chorus girls, to supplement the Green Room for the principals, both decorated in equal luxury; the first theatre to afford stars and chorus girls equally beautiful individual dressing tables—all designed in harmony with the dressing rooms and theatre style; "the first theatre to eliminate the traditional stage doorman; the portals through which pass THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRLS IN THE WORLD are guarded by girl receptionists as sweet and beautiful as those within the stage confines."

There are, besides these benefits, "extraordinary comforts for the beautiful girls backstage, installed for the first time in any theatre," a powder room, for example, where they may be sprayed with whiting by compressed air, a safety deposit for their valuables, refrigeration for their flowers, a gymnasium and showers, a spacious room for a last look at their costumes, "elevators, ramps and a travatine (*sic*) stairway to preserve their energy," etc., plus a Club Room for the musicians, another for the "attachés,"

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and a Card Room for the stage hands; gratuities are barred, and the "attachés" have had military training. "The most notable contribution to the progress of the American Theatre" is the establishment of a minimum wage of $100 a week for the girls, the highest salary ever paid for chorus work and also "there is no limit to the salaries paid for selected beauties." That is splendid; sugar-daddies take notice.

By way of content the entertainment consists of some sixty scenes and diverse overtures. The best of the company is Will Mahoney, whose song about the ants in his pants, dancing on the mahoneyphone and other tricks are good old sound clowning, always expert and applauded. There are several before-the-curtain skits that go well, especially that where the policeman after having been told by the arrested gangster everything and everybody connected with the hold-up, hits him over the head—so you won't tell, will you! The dinosaur seems accurate and primevally dull, for after he brings in Miss Lucille Page his invention seems exhausted; while she bends and contorts in expressive dance, he seems able to think of nothing beyond spitting out foam or salt, or perhaps it is beads, so often found in primordial earths. "Bedlam," the scene of buying a bed, has its funny moments and has, furthermore, places where five years ago the audience would not have known the intentions were dirty, so thoroughly dirty are the intentions. The silver wolfhounds and some of the dancing patterns in chromium and elsewhere were really beautiful; and the dance "Mask and Hands" often effective if Teutonically reminiscent. The polite orgasms and glass scimitars of Ravel's "Bolero" were as they were. The costumes are lavish, the expense showy and immense, the changes rapid and well practised and the girls most unusually pretty. The entire production, as I have said already, was directed and produced by Mr. Carroll; the waterwagons by means of which refreshment between acts is provided for everybody are also "the sole creation of Mr. Carroll; they were especially designed and built after plans suggested by him."

STARK YOUNG.

A Nonfiction Film

THE BRITISH film production of "The Dreyfus Case" is "a page out of history," and thanks to this quality is a departure from the commonplace materials and morals usually treated in the movies. It is, of course, an ideal page from the point of view of movietone, having a matchless detective problem, fabulous villains and fabulous heroes; but its subject matter also gives it a more generous moral note and permits it, at moments, to strike the grand style of drama. The evidently strong appeal of the film play, in spite of the technical defects still characteristic of English work, is a sign that our public has been starved for such things.

As a document the play is faithful to an extraordinary degree, probably as no other historical motion picture has ever been. This accuracy must be attributed to the fact that Alfred Dreyfus himself is still living and aided in the production. The action has been summarized from the real records of the *cause célèbre*, greatly condensed for purposes of staging, while an intelligent effort has been made to present, through the selection of actors and their make-up, the true portraits of the principal characters involved: Dreyfus, Esterhazy, Zola, Labori, Picquart. The dialogue, in all important instances, to a student of the affair, sounded remarkably as if it were based on actual newspaper reports of the trials. Only one or two minor errors evaded M. Dreyfus' attention or memory of the events of thirty years ago, and all other variations from the original were the result of compression or supposed dramatic necessity. The English producers have been scholarly and ingenious on the score of history. In spite of the staginess of many sets and compositions, much obscure photography and the frequently declamatory style of acting, the intense drama of injustice "gets through."

For the public which has heard much but knows little of the famous affair, the detailed picture of the notorious miscarriage of justice which took place in the court martial of 1894 is both impressive and instructive. Captain Dreyfus is arrested and accused by his military judges, upon flimsy suspicions and because he is a Jew. The military caste is shown fortifying its case against its own doubts and attacks from outside. "We have accused and we must convict!"—this was the sentiment of the heads of the army in the Dreyfus case, as in all previous and later frame-ups. Dreyfus is condemned, and the ceremony of his degradation, with the traditional stripping of the officer's buttons and galons and breaking of his sword, touches a high point of visual drama.

Dreyfus is martyrized; but the "crusade for truth and justice" begins. An army of Dreyfusards gathers to battle for the revision of the verdict, and soon all France is engulfed in a kind of bloodless civil war. The Dreyfus case becomes the focus of a larger national struggle between military-clerical reactionists and republicans. At this stage the film should have enlarged its scope, instead of confining itself to the specific intrigue. The sensational entrance of Zola into the case with his "J'accuse" gives the opportunity for the picturing of mass actions by means of the sweeping camera, as Eisenstein and certain American directors have used it. To represent the working of anti-Semitism and hysterical jingoism upon the people is not an easy task, to be sure; but the film play indicates virtually nothing of these forces. The larger chances at painting in the historical background the English producers have missed, just as they have failed to clarify the motives for the whole struggle. In its hard facts the affair was often far more dramatic than certain imagined scenes here reproduced: Zola actually reading "J'accuse" before his assembled friends, rather than to the editor alone; Zola being mobbed on the steps of the Palace of Justice. . . . To have avoided stage artifice wholly and rigorously throughout the work would have been to have set a valuable precedent for nonfiction films, and in this case would have involved no loss of interest whatever.

Faced with so much sheer melodrama, the English players have wisely tried for restraint in their acting. Cedric Hardwicke's Dreyfus and George Merritt's Zola are especially effective performances. The British diction in the talking picture seems always audible, and is vastly refreshing after so many examples of Hollywood's idea of the spoken tongue.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Appreciation of Veblen

SIR: Mr. Lewis Mumford, in his discerning article on Thorstein Veblen in the issue of August 5, seems, in generalizing on the lack of appreciation of Veblen, to have made one unfortunate omission. He begins by stating:

> About a year ago I went through the . . . journals to see whether anyone had been tempted to add to the rather perfunctory appreciations of him that appeared soon after his death, but I could not find a word about him. The reason for this neglect was at first obscure to me; but a sympathetic economist explained that Veblen's economics had been displaced by the detailed analysis of the so-called statistical school.

But Mr. Mumford missed the New Republic files, where he could have found in the issue of September 4, 1929, an authentic interpretation of Veblen's strange genius and of his great contribution. And, interestingly enough, in the light of Mr. Mumford's aspersions on statistical economics, it was written by the outstanding exponent of statistical economics, Professor Wesley C. Mitchell!

FRANCIS D. TYSON.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Mr. Jury on Pegasus

SIR: I think it was Thomas H. Huxley who once said that "An infinite number of monkeys pounding an infinite number of typewriters for all eternity must at some time or other produce the "Iliad" of Homer, the compositions of Beethoven and a dissertation on the binomial theorem of Newton."

When I read that I doubted it very much, but since reading Allen Tate's poem "The Last Days of Alice," which appeared in The New Republic of May 13, I am half inclined to the belief that I drew a too hasty judgment. I submit these exemplars in proof of what might happen in the unbounded realms of time.

Homer, you recall, puts in the mouth of Agamemnon in upbraiding Diomedes the words: "Ah me, thou son of wise Tydeus, tamer of horses, why shrinkest thou, why gazest thou along the highways of battle?"

Now Alice, although not a creature given to "shrinking," for our modern Homer describes her as "mammoth but not fat," nevertheless, has been credited with gazing, as the author says, "learnedly down her airy nose." One might pause to note that this last mentioned exercise seems to be the favorite of modern poets, but the subject is not Alice's nose, but the thought that many see in this illustration an approximation of Homer, which, with a thunderous acceleration of the hairy fingers and toes of our ancient and blinking brothers on their typewriters—to say nothing of the accompanying contortions of tails—gives substantial promise that Homer is only about 150 trillion years away in the offing of monkeydom. Mr. Tate opens with:

> Above in the dozing leaves the grinning cat
> Quivers forever with his abstract rage . . .

Later, he throws on Alice a few ponderous words of conventional meter (to distinguish the picture from prose), saying:

> Alone to the weight of impassivity,
> Incest of spirit, theorem of desire.

And

> Being all infinite, function, depth and mass
> Without figure;
> A mathematical shroud
> Hurled at the air . . .

In "theorem of desire" and "mathematical shroud hurled at the air," we might discern faint forecasts of Einstein and hindcasts of Newton, although I think the discoverer of the law of gravitation would not treat his mathematical shroud quite so rough.

And, lastly, let us cut this lovely lump out of "Alice" (she won't miss it) recalling, as some physicist might say, Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" (I think he wrote something by that name):

> All space that heaven is a dayless night,
> A nightless day driven by perfect lust
> For vacancy, in which her frail eyesight
> Stares at the drowsy cubes of human dust.

As a constant and interested reader of the prose in The New Republic, I would prefer (and I think I speak for many others) that you hang your poet contributors (all but one perhaps) by their tails on their own stiff lines. In time they might succeed in unraveling the intricacies and mysteries of their own prehensiles. Why ask your readers to perform that worthless exercise?

To my mind poetry appeals to the subtler vision of men, enlarging their spiritual scope and awareness of the problems and mysteries of life, thereby enabling them the better to deal with life much as a sculptor with his transforming marble, rather than like a vulgar announcer at a side show of freaks.

JOHN G. JURY.

San Francisco, Calif.

Graft in England

SIR: I am reading Mr. Flynn's articles with great interest. One thing they call to mind: the curious idea that there is no graft in England. What encourages the impression is the unquestionable fact of the practically immaculate judiciary in England. Tampering with an English judge is almost inconceivable. Tradition of probity is adamantine. But graft takes place outside the law and the stringent law of libel protects the grafter. In England Mr. Flynn would have a dozen libel actions on his hands. Like the judges, the bureaucracy is also almost immune from corruption. These are very strong points. But the maxim of the law is "the greater the truth the greater the libel." Again "caveat emptor" results in the fleeced shareholder having no remedy unless there is a demonstrable misstatement in prospectus or in balance sheet. That was where Lord Kylsant slipped.

Take the case of the Sapphire and Ruby Mines of Montana, floated in London and subscribed in an hour. The public lost every cent of $2,000,000 paid to the promoters. Technically the prospectus contained no misstatement, but it affords a pregnant instance of a covered pitfall. Again, the Londonderry Mine of West Australia, through which in 1896 $3,000,000 was taken from the public and not a cent ever recovered.

Then as regards the exceptional officials: Visible cases are very few, but one notices an adjuster of taxes during the War dealing with a wealthy corporation which was so satisfied about his ability as to provide him with an appointment carrying four times his salary. Also a purchasing agent for the army who obtained a similar reward. An excise officer whose estate for probate showed "savings" amounting to considerably more than his total salary during his forty years of service. An engineer of a railroad company whose estate at death showed four times the total of his high salary received during thirty years of service.

I once rented a country house in England and my groom quite honestly asked me if I would object to changing my fodder merchant, because the one he could recommend allowed a commission of 10 percent to the groom. The youth was perfectly candid and it would have been useless to attempt to persuade him of any suspicion of wrongness in the transaction. He was a nice young man and otherwise quite trustworthy. But such commissions are so firmly established as to be regarded as "customary." These instances should make it apparent why there is no Mr. Flynn in England. Simply because such things are "not mentioned"; not because they are not done. When one slips into the meshes of the law, the public is horrified; the lawyers laugh.

COURTNEY ROWLAND.

Piedmont, Calif.

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Vivendo Discimus

Life: Outlines of General Biology, by Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thomson. New York: Harper and Brothers. 2 vols. 1,515 pages. $8.

HOW SHALL one summarize this book, or convey an adequate sense of its importance? On the surface, it is a comprehensive treatise on biology. In the course of fifteen hundred closely written pages, the authors have systematically covered the entire world of living organisms. Each of the main sections on the subsciences of biology is treated as a unit in itself, and for the sake of the reader who may go no further, certain recurrent themes reënter and are rephrased in each section. The references to contemporary writers and recent researches are as remarkable as the amplitude of historical detail; while the illustrations are fascinating, as anyone acquainted with J. Arthur Thomson's "System of Animate Nature" or his numerous collected papers on biology would of course anticipate. The combination of detailed natural history, systematic critical thought, philosophic generalization and social observation recalls the great tradition of Darwin himself. For the reader of general intelligence who is vague about the workings of Mendelism or the role of the hormones or the place of bacteria in the evolutionary scheme, these volumes will either provide a fairly detailed answer or discuss the present stage of our ignorance.

But whoever goes to this book merely for biological knowledge will get more than he has bargained for. "Life" is more than a textbook on biology: it is a summary of the life experience of two eminent scientists and scholars, and it is an outline of their biological philosophy. Here the authors have stated more precisely and clearly and amply the main lines of thought that were sketched out in their little books on "Sex" and "Evolution" and "Biology" in the Home University Library. He who touches this book touches a man, in this case, two men, one shrewd, gentle, kindly, humorous, with a real talent for literary expression and lucid exposition, the other vigorous, incisive, systematic, satirical, who, like the teachers of Greece, communicates more fully in his conversations and diagrams and brilliant impromptus than he has ever done before within the covers of a book. The men themselves are lifelong friends; Thomson is seventy years old, Geddes seventy-seven: like Ulysses, they feel that old age hath yet its honor and its toil, and this prolonged essay is a final account of their voyage in the realms of life.

The authors begin with a sense of the uniqueness of organic life. The organism persists in spite of the continual state of change and internal transformation: it grows, multiplies, develops, varies, evolves: it enregisters its responses to the environment, carrying its history with it, not necessarily by an external change of shape, as iron, hit by a sledgehammer, will show the dent, but in the form of memory, with no perceptible external accompaniment. Finally, nearly all organisms manifest insurgence: they actively hit back at their environment and make an effort to control it. Passive adaptation, adjustment in the sense of compliance, is only one side of the relation: active adaptation, domination by energy, skill, invention, mind, is the other side of it. Sometimes the environment determines the organism, sometimes the organism dominates the environment: life is precisely this state of continued tension and interaction. Since organism and environment cannot be separated from each other, neither heredity nor nurture is an exclusive factor, and the old quarrel between those who believe in education and social improvement and those who believe in the improvement of the race and the encouragement of good strains is a meaningless one.

Philosophers have defined life in terms of pure spirit and nineteenth-century scientists regarded it as a mechanical concourse of atoms: in the view of Geddes and Thomson neither of these definitions is applicable. Life is both a biological and a psychological activity; and though the psychological element cannot be detected in the lower organisms, the principle of continuity would point to some dim rudiment of it even here. This view does not deny the physical interpretation of living phenomena, as far as such descriptions can carry. "What a methodological vitalism says is simply this: There is a chemistry and physics, a mechanics and dynamics, of the living organism; but, when they have finished their ledger, the description is biologically inadequate." The authors reject the notion of an extraneous psychic factor, an entelechy or soul, which directs the phenomena of life: growth and reproduction are, on the contrary, autonomous functions of body-minds or mind-bodies. Since the authors take life as their field, they do not shrink from discussing any of its manifestations: art and science are as much a product of life as pollen and honey, and to stop short at man's institutions would be as absurd as to carry the description of bees no further than the entrance to the hive.

The relations between organic life and social life, between biology and sociology, have never been put so clearly as in the final chapters, where Professor Geddes marshals together his systematic thought in both departments. For Geddes a sociology that remains at the level of statistics is no more sociology than a biology that remains at the level of biochemistry or biometrics, although statistical analysis is an essential part of sociology, even as biochemistry lights up great tracts of biology. Geddes' correlation of the fundamental sciences of biology with the parallel sciences of sociology is an essential contribution to orderly thought: it justifies Geddes' boast of biology as the systematic science *par excellence,* from the time of Linnæus and Buffon down to our day.

Besides these notations, diagrams, stimulating clarifications, poetic intuitions and daring reachings out into fields not fully charted and covered—acts of thought which make this book unique among works on biology—the authors have disregarded the cut-and-dried conventions of the textbooks in still another fashion: they have illuminated their arguments with a hoard of significant experiences and anecdotes, to say nothing of sly digs and satiric byplays. The chapter on sleep contains, for example, their own practical observations on the subject; the section on education is the result of a lifetime's reflection on the education of their students, their children and above all, perhaps, themselves; for these men, with their wealth of easily carried scholarship and their humane personalities, must be counted as among the best educated men in Western civilization. Even the hints on the care of the body and the preservation of health from two such hale senescents cannot be readily put aside; for their book on life is the culmination and fulfilment of two lives, and the authors themselves are among its most vital illustrations.

What, finally, is their *Weltanschauung?* They see the forces of life today, human life above all, subjected to the vandalism, the debasement, the murderous competitions and wars that mark what we optimistically call the Machine Age. They behold an education chained to routine, an industrial system bent upon pecuniary success, and a social life in which the vital values, those of health, racial im-

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provement, reproduction, education, are subjected to foreign pecuniary and mechanical demands. The authors have no simple formula for reviving the values and activities of life: they believe in a new orientation in science, with increasing emphasis upon the biological and sociological disciplines, they believe in the renewal of education, with the acquisition of a richer experience through regional survey and the practice of the arts and experimental intercourse with the natural and social environment, an education that faces the future as well as the past; they believe in the stabilization of the family relations through intelligent control of births and through permanent mating; they are against war, as a destructive and mis-selective process, and they are against mammonism and mechanolatry, in their many forms and phases. Above all, they are filled with the wonder and awe of Life: they exhibit, in their own right, a sense of its highest potentialities. These two volumes are a comprehensive answer to the "Modern Temper," to all the dreary miseducation and discouragement that have arisen out of our venal and mechanical civilization, with its brutal wars and its aimless and bewildered states of peace. For Life has, above all, the quality of insurgence; and even though the machine has long dominated us, we will yet hit back. In that sense, every new baby is a revolutionist.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

The ABC of Planlessness

America's Primer, by Morris L. Ernst. Illustrated by Walter Cole. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 158 pages. $2.

MILIN wrote "New Russia's Primer," which tells the essential facts about Russia's three-and-a-half-year-old plan, is intelligible to school children, and is, in fact, a school text, printed by the hundred thousand and paid for by the State.

Morris Ernst has written "America's Primer," which scarcely pretends to tell the essential facts about America's century-and-a-half-old planlessness, is not intelligible to the average school child, will appeal to comparatively few members of our adult population, let alone children, and costs two dollars.

The contrast is not altogether Mr. Ernst's fault. In Russia, the simplifications brought about through the efforts of Marx, Lenin and others have made primer education possible. It is not possible in America. One feels that Mr. Ernst would have done well to acknowledge as much and explain why. The explanation would have made a useful chapter in his book, which is, of course, not a primer, but simply a capable job of liberal pamphleteering. Mr. Ernst's pamphlet is only a little longer than a couple of extended magazine articles. If it had been about three times as long—long enough to cover adequately the essential elements of education, the press and other instruments of communication, and the arts and sciences under capitalism—it would probably have been not merely a better book, but a better primer. And it could still have been sold for two dollars, even under capitalism.

But perhaps Mr. Ernst knows his American schoolboy—whether grizzled bank president or pap-fed collegian—better than the reviewer. There is method in his book, and reasonably good organization. The essential facts of wealth production and income distribution are swiftly surveyed. The contradictions between profession and practice in modern business are sharply indicated. The ideology and social psychology of our acquisitive society are described objectively enough, although with occasional cynicism. But the book is too short. It is impossible to telegraph a description of chaos.

Mr. Ernst is far too intelligent not to be thoroughly aware of the nature and limitations of his own performance. In fact, had he chosen to carry his genial cynicism a step farther, one could imagine him writing a preface for "America's Primer" somewhat as follows:

"This book itself is an excellent example of the characteristic American planlessness which it describes. In the first place, it was written hastily and rushed to press in order to exploit the interest aroused in America by a genuine piece of education, 'New Russia's Primer.' Its motivation and significance, therefore, lie chiefly in the field of middle-class literary fashion, and scarcely at all in the field of education. That, dear reader, is very American. Education is a dynamic thing, designed to transform the life attitudes of the individual, and ultimately those of society. You will note the absence of such intention or effect in this book. The people at whom it is directed—they are not children—derive a certain masochistic pleasure from contemplating passively the familiar contradictions and stultifications of our present social and economic dilemma. I, as a liberal journalist, have a certain vested interest in exploiting this passivity and cynicism. In other words, dear reader, I have striven earnestly to give you what you want, in so far as it was possible to do so and still give the publisher what he wanted when he wanted it. This, in America, we call 'education.'"

JAMES RORTY.

Cooper of Cooperstown

James Fenimore Cooper, by Henry Walcott Boynton. New York: The Century Company. 408 pages. $5.

LIKE Hawthorne, Cooper is said to have been unwilling that any authorized account of his life should be prepared after his death; and for many years Bryant's sketch in his funeral oration was the only authentic piece of biography that existed. Is it possible that Cooper himself realized how little his career offered for biographical writing of the first order? An admirable man, to be sure, and far from being a colorless one; but somehow not a grateful subject for either the narrative or the analytical biographer: there was too little action or adventure in his life to make such a biography as Byron's; far too little anecdote or conversation to tempt a Boswell or a Lockhart; and too little complexity in his inner life to attract the psychologist. Indeed, he was almost the perfect extrovert: even his contentiousness (with its long-drawn-out and, to tell the truth, rather tedious consequences) sprang from the touchiness of extroversion, not from the disharmony of its opposite; and your extrovert must play a large role in affairs if he is to be of prime interest biographically. The consulship of Lyons was hardly a role of this type.

Yet the author of "The Spy" and "The Pathfinder" was much too sizable a figure not to be worth a serious "life," unpromising as the materials might seem; and, in fact, one of the most admirable volumes in the old American Men of Letters series is a life of Cooper by Lounsbury of Yale, written early in the eighties. It is true that Lounsbury belonged to a period when it seemed important to say of a novelist, "Here are no incitements to passion, no prurient suggestions of sensual delights"; and that, in general, his criticism is of the old school. But his book is so good that I think only a particularly fresh point of view, or the ap-

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pearance of important new materials, would justify a second life. Mr. Boynton's justification must be on the latter ground rather than on the former. It is hard to see that he has done much to force a revision of one's impressions of Cooper either as a man or as a writer. He himself says: "His failures and half-failures are now of small moment unless in the eyes of a literary historian here or there. His famous successes need no revaluation: there he has been done justice in the main." Of Cooper's personality, Mr. Boynton seems to hold much the same view as Lounsbury: he is perhaps less ironic as regards the man's foibles (he is certainly less witty), but, like Lounsbury, he is neither a hero worshiper nor an iconoclast. And he makes no effort to see Cooper afresh—either on the literary level, against a new background of critical theory or, on another level, against a new background of social history.

Short of this, his book is as skillful and as interesting as a book on Cooper could be. The man, as I say, was far from being colorless; and Mr. Boynton makes the most of what was striking or picturesque in his career. He is able to tell a fuller story than Lounsbury's because he has had access, as the earlier biographer had not, to the documents in possesion of the family—not only to those collected a few years ago in "The Correspondence of James Fenimore Cooper," but also to business papers and to an intermittent, unpublished diary. These materials he has used appreciatively and with an easy informality. Better than from Lounsbury, one gets an impression of the enterprising and prosperous family background; of Cooper's early career in the navy; of those amusingly well-to-do, prosaic, domestic, country-gentlemanly years of Cooper's early maturity, out of which, as out of a homely cocoon, emerged the unexpectedly bright lepidopteran who wrote "The Spy." One sees Cooper more interestingly than before in his family relations, for Mr. Boynton shows more concern than his predecessor for Mrs. Cooper and for the daughters, and this is warranted by Cooper's highly patriarchal way of life; one sees him more clearly, too, in his friendly relations, for Mr. Boynton gives considerable space to Dana and Bryant and Morse and La Fayette and the nautical comrades. The wearisome tale of Cooper's quarrels with his neighbors, after his return from Europe, and of his protracted struggle with the Whig newspapers, Mr. Boynton makes as readable as possible—and that is to say much. Finally, he has enriched his portrait by rather free quotations from Cooper's prefaces, many of which are now out of print, but which often have a higher flavor, as personal expressions, than one might expect.

In short, a better biography than this, simply as narrative, is not now likely to be written. Any later writer who aspires to make a book out of Cooper's career will have to play the role of interpreter as well as story-teller. And surely the man's life, despite his simplicity as a character, his freedom from inner entanglements, would lend itself to such treatment without strain. In few other American literary careers is the interplay of nationalism and cosmopolitanism more suggestively at work than in his; from the social point of view, Cooper the country squire and the systematic democrat, the believer in political equality and in social distinctions, could well be turned into a symbol. Critically speaking, could not much still be made of the piquant intermingling in his fiction of poetic feeling and respect for enterprise, of our national tough-mindedness with a streak of our transcendentalism? A book on one of these themes remains to be written: meanwhile, Mr. Boynton's biography will see much service and deserve to see it.

NEWTON ARVIN.

The Science of Human Welfare

Social Welfare and Professional Education, by Edith Abbott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 177 pages. $2.

EDITH ABBOTT, who directed the Wickersham survey of crime among the foreign born, is a distinguished leader in the movement to establish professional standards in the field of social service. These six essays garner much of the richness of her twenty years' experience in that adventure.

A striking phase of contemporary history is the rapid increase of public expenditures for social services in all the civilized countries of the world—an increase occurring apparently under both conservative and radical regimes. In Great Britain these expenditures for 1929—the appropriations being made by the Conservative government, before the inauguration of the Labor Cabinet—were £240,000,000. In the United States social-service expenditures have risen rapidly and continuously since the Civil War. In these circumstances, the need for expertness in social service is overwhelming; yet political patronage, the spoils system, institutionalism—many elements in American custom and even in the field of American social service itself—rise in opposition to the idea that the agencies of human welfare should equip themselves with all the knowledge gathered by universities or institutes of research in order to dispatch their vital tasks.

Miss Abbott reveals the varied aspects of her theme with freshness and penetration. Perhaps the most brilliant chapter of her book deals with the inexpert and fallacious assembly and use of social statistics. But the entire narrative is significant and has the rich background and treatment possible only for a narrator who draws from a long and deep individual knowledge of her subject.

In commenting on the public treatment of mental illness, for instance, Miss Abbott gives a vivid outline of the miseries of the insane in Illinois, in 1846, chained to floors and fed through "grub-holes," sick men and women, dirty, wretched, cold, neglected, the topic of Dorothea Dix's memorial to the state legislature. Dorothea Dix came to Illinois on a prairie schooner more than eighty years ago. Today, after the reforms for which she was responsible:

> Our last [Illinois] legislature appropriated more than $12,000,000 for the upkeep of . . . hospitals for the insane. There is no question of our good intentions, but how far is our work modern and scientific? Are we sure that we are now giving our state wards the kind of preventive treatment that modern medicine and social welfare prescribe? . . . What we need is a thorough scientific study of the present public provision for the insane, with a consideration of the possibilities of extra-mural care, more adequate medical and social service, smaller institutions, precommitment treatment, new commitment procedure, and not merely a huge appropriation taken from the bottomless pocket of the taxpayer and mechanically spent for larger and still larger hospitals.

In spite of the convincing pictures of community error which the author draws for us, her survey has a path-finding quality, exhilarating to the reader along the course of his dismay. The tone of it is novel and individual, a tone hopeful and yet strongly and justly condemnatory,

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sad and yet energized. In the range of its social philosophy, in its quiet power and instinctive, swift elimination of cheaper things, Miss Abbott's book belongs to the great American tradition, the tradition of Emerson and Thoreau.

EDITH FRANKLIN WYATT.

Twice-Told Tale

Hatter's Castle, by A. J. Cronin. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

IN THE Scottish Lowlands in 1879, James Brodie was a hatter, but being convinced that he came of an aristocratic line, he built himself a small, ugly castle with a squat, deformed tower.

From the belligerent stupid pride of this man issues a succession of tragedies. The wife, despised for her meekness of spirit, perishes of cruel neglect. The daughter Mary, deflowered in all innocence, is cast out in a storm and almost drowned. Reaching the shelter of a cowshed at last, alone in premature labor, in the stable dung, she gives birth to a child at the very instant when Denis Foyle, tea salesman and father of her child, plunges to his death in a railroad accident. The whole familiar sequence is pursued as relentlessly this time as ever before. The son Matthew takes his turn: a fop with ribbons on his mandolin, who longs to cut a daring figure, but dwindles, under Brodie's reign, to failure. The daughter Nessie is the only creature who finds favor in Brodie's sight, and this is because she is to achieve distinction for him through her scholarship. Overwrought at last with study and fear she hangs herself, with the happy precision of the crazed.

Each in his way escapes: Matthew in taking away his father's mistress, Mary in marrying the young doctor whom Brodie hates, Nessie and her mother in death. Only the tough old granny survives, and mumbles her greed at the end of the unhappy tale as at the beginning. In these various escapes, Brodie is brought low. Even the old crone has it in her power to add to the terrifying, bewildering chastisement, when she tells him that his blooded connections were established "on the wrong side of the blanket." He fails in business, he must mortgage his castle, and, final touch, "a low-flying crow swept over him and with a derisive 'caw-caw' dropped its excrement upon his shoulder."

There is competence here rather than power. The author has handled these passions with an able and orderly forward drive, but the book remains an uninspired epitome of nineteenth-century novels, and as such one is resentful that an obviously fine talent has not directed itself into a fresher path. The question continually arises from the pages as they turn: "Very good, but why do you write again what those others wrote so well?" That former dark and irresistible beauty is lacking, and the precedents of these characters are all too apparent: Mary and Nessie are out of Hardy, Dr. Renwick is out of Eliot, and Brodie himself out of Brontë.

It may be said that good work is always good work, but such a statement must be qualified. It does matter in what period of time certain literary forms are created; and only in their own periods can these forms be compelling. Vitality derived from the very body of a period cannot be imitated. The modern is permitted to write of the past, as near or as far as he will, but in the spirit and with the power of his own time. The flowing stream does not turn back upon itself.

HAZEL HAWTHORNE.

Book Notes

EDUCATION

FADS AND FALLACIES IN PRESENT-DAY EDUCATION, by H. E. Buchholz. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 200 pages. $1.50.*

In these informally amusing essays, Mr. Buchholz subjects the directors of our teachers' colleges to what, in sporting parlance, is called a series of flying mares. His thesis is that American secondary educators have abandoned pedagogy in favor of dry nursing: that they now teach children to use the knife and fork instead of the blackboard. Children are trained to fit into, rather than master, their environment; and the process is called "training for leadership." As Mr. Buchholz implies—and as the bureaucrats in our normal schools have forgotten—it is the proper function of formal education, even from the tenderest years, to lead and direct not man's action, but his thought.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

DANGEROUS DRUGS, by Arthur Woods. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 123 pages. $2.*

The former police commissioner of New York was recently associated with the opium committee of the League of Nations. This brief but comprehensive study is the fruit of the association. After giving a short account of the physical effects of morphine, heroin and cocaine, of the extent of the traffic in them, of its social effects and of the attempts at regulation, Colonel Woods comes to the conclusion that the illicit traffic can be stopped only through a system of double control. First, there must be the strictest control within each and every nation, either through government ownership or government supervision, of the factories engaged in the manufacture of narcotics. Second, there must be the strictest control of the international traffic in them, so that every government will adopt and enforce the import and export certificate system as recommended by the League of Nations; no export certificate should be issued without a corresponding import license.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY, by Harold J. Laski. *New Haven: The Yale University Press. 317 pages. $3.50.*

In the nine essays here reprinted, Mr. Laski employs the whole force of his urbane scholarship in an effort to resolve the paradoxical statement "that a consistent decentralization is the only effective cure for an undue localism" within the modern State. For him, the State should rule not by exercise of impersonal authority, but by teaching all citizens, in some degree, the art of self-government. Without intending any gratuitous disparagement of their author's more recent publications, it may be said that these essays, even after ten years, possess a vitality which now is foreign to the political writings of liberal theorists. As Mr. Laski says, refuting Bentham, it has become clear that altruism is an instinct implied in the existence of the herd; but, as he also says, recalling Maistre, the executioner is still the cornerstone of our society. The years since the War have done little to raise the spirits of believers in the pluralistic State.

UNEMPLOYMENT OR WAR, by Maurice Colbourne. *New York: Coward-McCann. 307 pages. $3.*

Mr. Colbourne, an English actor, has produced an interesting piece of syncretism in which he advocates government control of production and distribution through credit inflation. His prophet is Douglas, the Scotch engineer, whose questions are very hard to answer from an orthodox standpoint, and he pushes anti-thrift theories to drastic conclusions.

WORLD POLITICS

THE GENIUS OF MEXICO, edited by Hubert C. Herring and Katharine Terrill. *New York: The Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America. 334 pages. $2.50.*

The lectures collected in this volume were delivered in Mexico City in 1930, before an audience composed of American tourists.

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Most of the lecturers were Mexican officials; a few were Americans. The subjects discussed cover a wide range: race, religion, art, education, economic problems, emigration, government, relations with the United States, the Monroe Doctrine. The lectures are of various degrees of merit and demerit. The best—and they are very fine—are the opening lectures by Moisés Sáenz, who gives a rapid, vivid, impressionistic sketch of the people and the country, and the last, by Carleton Beals, who draws up the "balance sheet of the revolution."

POLISH ATROCITIES IN UKRAINE, compiled and edited by Emil Revyuk. *New York: United Ukrainian Organizations of the United States. 512 pages. Price not stated.*

This volume contains a large number of documents and newspaper articles dealing with the alleged Polish atrocities in the Ukraine. Little doubt can remain after perusing these documents that the Poles have ruthlessly violated their minority obligations. Whether or not as a result of the protest of the Ukrainians, summarized in this book, it seems that the Polish government recently has undertaken to bring about reforms.

Fiction

AFTER LEAVING MR. MACKENZIE, by Jean Rhys. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.*

Miss Jean Rhys has written the story of a woman whose subtlety of temperament and simplicity of intention were inexpressible in the code language of organized society, especially of middle-class society. The style of Miss Rhys, as she reveals this intricate yet ingenuous Julia, is linear, "classical": in the literal sense, it is almost bare; but it is full of imputations, implications, like a fine and sensitive line drawing. Julia was self-deceived to imagine that the intimacy of love relations defied the pitfalls of deceit. She was altogether without the shrewdness which ensures power. She was married, divorced, had a child that died. She was more reckless than most people and her recklessness invited lovers who were flattered by her abandon. When she was in her late thirties, she met Mr. Mackenzie, and his epicurean appreciation of her, committing him to nothing, robbed her of the last illusion needed to preserve self-respect in the face of worldly failure. When Julia and Mr. Mackenzie parted in Paris, Julia saw herself with his eyes: a pretty, foolish, fading siren, living by her wits. Mr. Mackenzie still sent Julia money, which she had to accept. When she met him in a restaurant, she returned his check and struck his face. If only Julia could believe again, as she had believed when a child! Mr. Horsfield paid her fare back to England. Her family regarded her as an immoral woman. She could not believe in Mr. Horsfield, whose prosperity had never allowed him to be disillusioned. She returned to Paris. One day she said to herself that it was funny to end where most people started, indifferent and without any pity at all. When she met Mr. Mackenzie again, she borrowed a hundred francs. She had not committed suicide after all. . . . This faithful book, with its spare, suggestive method, is more profoundly destructive of hypocrisies—social and esthetic subterfuges—than would be volumes of diatribe less beautiful in complete restraint.

THE HERO: The Tale of a Political Murder, by Alfred Neumann. *Translated by Huntley Paterson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

Alfred Neumann's latest is not a historical novel, but a meticulous psychopathic study and an ironic portrait of the political assassin as hero. This hero, ex-Captain Hubert Hoff, living as a professional dancer in one of the typical capitals of post-war Europe, is delegated by his party to murder the revolutionary prime minister. Inevitably the description of this murder gives the novel its most exciting pages; thereafter, the book is an exacting and almost scientific study of mental downfall. One is principally concerned with the relation between Hoff and his mysterious double, David Hertz, whose own experience as a murderer allows a fatally clarified understanding between the two men. This understanding becomes disastrous for both of them and, incidentally, introduces the reader to new, if alien, modernities—mental processes that are fascinating until they reach extremes not unlike

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the facile, insinuating and incredible confessions of a *surréaliste*. This central feature of the book is more interesting than the opening pages, with their familiar freight of backstage scenes in a gay cabaret, a pious landlady, a spying dwarf, a prostitute-danseuse, a philosopher-drummer, and "the first violin, an extremely gifted man from the Baltic regions, but unfortunately a cocaine fiend."

FATHER MALACHY'S MIRACLE, by Bruce Marshall. *New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.*

Hilaire Belloc once remarked that only north of the Tweed will one hear true humor at the expense of the infernal twins, Sin and Death. It is with the first-born of those twins that Mr. Marshall, until lately a public accountant in Edinburgh, has implicitly concerned himself while writing his circumstantial account of Father Malachy's miracle. His broad irony lends itself, in particular, to assaults upon what used to be called the intellectually proud: "The thinkers and those who were able to choose their own library books and to ask for a cup of coffee in comprehensible French were, of course, dead against the miracle which they opposed as bitterly and as incompetently as Gladstone had, in the nineteenth century, opposed the biology of Darwin and Huxley." Mr. Marshall's book, which is a finished novel as well as an amusing satire, does from the amateur what Ronald Knox's skits do from the professional point of view, to make organized religion yield genuine comedy. This treatment, objective rather than subjective, of a religious theme as comedy, is a gesture toward the great tradition in dealing with ghostly matters.

Contributors

H. N. BRAILSFORD, the English publicist, delivered a series of lectures in this country last winter. He is the author of "Shelley, Godwin and Their Circle," "Olives of Endless Age" and other books, and is a contributor to The New Leader, of which he was formerly editor.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER, the British novelist and poet, is the author of "Lolly Willowes," "Mr. Fortune's Maggot" and "The Loving Heart." Her latest book was "Opus 7," a long poem.

JAMES MEYERS, industrial secretary of the Social Service Commission of the Federal Council of Churches, is the author of "Representative Government in Industry" and other books. He has had first-hand contacts with the recent textile strikes at Marion and Danville, and has been active in mediation, relief and research in the recent coal strikes which his article describes.

ROBERT LITTELL, at one time literary editor of The New Republic, was subsequently dramatic critic of The New York World, continuing in that capacity until the sudden death of the paper last February.

MICHAEL FARBMAN, a journalist specializing in economics, finance and international relations, is editor of the year book "Europa" and author of "Piatiletka: The Story of the Five Year Plan," which was published abroad by The London Economist and issued last spring as a title in The New Republic Dollar Series.

LEWIS MUMFORD, critic of American life and letters, has completed a study of the arts in America between 1865 and 1895, a period which he calls "The Brown Decades." The book is on the fall list of Harcourt, Brace.

JAMES RORTY, for many years an advertising copywriter, has, so he says, "quit the racket for good." He is at present living on a farm in Connecticut and working on a novel.

NEWTON ARVIN, assistant professor of English at Smith College, has been spending the summer in Maine, studying Russian, writing essays and practising the Australian crawl.

EDITH FRANKLIN WYATT is the author of "Everyone His Own Way," "The Wind in the Corn," "The Invisible Gods" and other books.

HAZEL HAWTHORNE has been spending the summer at Provincetown working on a novel. The Hound and Horn will publish a short story of hers in an early issue.

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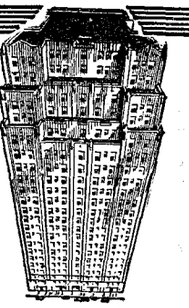

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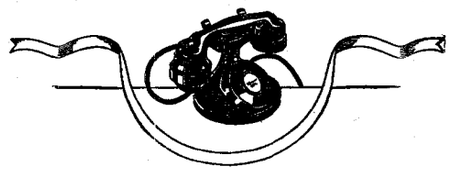

THE Bell System is chiefly people. There is four billion dollars' worth of telephone buildings and equipment but what makes these dead things live is the organization, the skill and the ideals of the people who operate this vast plant.

The System's ideals of service are reflected through the employees in 24 regional operating companies. Each company is adapted to the needs of this particular area. Each takes advantage of the improvements developed by the 5000 members of the Bell Laboratories staff. Each avails itself of the production economies of Western Electric, which manufactures equipment of the highest quality for the whole System. Each makes use of the general and technical staff work done by American Telephone and Telegraph.

The spirit of the people comprising this organization is also shown in the attitude of the System toward its business. Its policy is to pay a reasonable dividend to stockholders; to use all other earnings to improve and widen the service. There are more than 600,000 American Telephone and Telegraph Company stockholders . . . and no one person owns so much as one per cent of the stock.

The ideals of the Bell System are working in your interest every time you use the telephone. Through them, you get better and better service and constantly growing value for your money.

★ *AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY* ★

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